

LITTLE STRIX THE SCREECHER.

BY KIT CARSON, JR.

It was toward the last of March. We were making maple sugar over in the "Bradbury lot." It was "court week," and father had gone. He and old Deacon Stetson had been having a little difficulty about the line fence; the deacon wouldn't build his half, and father was trying to make him. So Will, and Tom, and I were in the business alone. There had been an excellent run of sap, as there always is when the mornings are cold and frosty and the days warm. We had four large kettles, hung on the "lug-pole" over our stone-arch, and kept them boiling from daylight till dark.

Some folks talk as if it were nothing but fun to make sap-sugar. That's all nonsense! It's the very hardest kind of work. We used to get so tired with lugging sap through the soft snow, cutting wood, and standing over the smoky, steaming fires, that we could scarcely get to the house when night came. We enjoyed it though, for the rewards were sweet, and further up the ridge the Edwards boys were making too; so we used to halloo back and forth. We did a little the biggest business, I think, though they were always bragging how much they had boiled down the day before.

We had driven hard all the week, and now night was coming on, with two barrels of sap still on hand. It was Saturday night, too, and it would all sour before Monday. Father had left word to get it all "turned in" Saturday night, and we had done our best, but it had been an unusually heavy run. About six o'clock the Edwards boys came down past us, drawing their syrup on a sled. They had got theirs done early, and laughed a little at the fix we were in.

"What's to be done?" said I, as they passed on, leaving us alone.

"Let's put it all in somehow," said Will.

"But it will take till midnight!" exclaimed Tom, looking wistfully after the Edwardses.

"Let it take till midnight then," replied Will. "But, look here, Tom, you'd better go over and do the chores; you can go along with the Edwards boys, and tell them, if they ask you, that we are going to finish ours anyhow."

Tom ran off after them; he was glad to have company; it was nearly a mile to the house, and all the way through the woods; and he was younger than Will and I. So we staid to finish boiling. The wood was cut; all we had to do was to tend the four kettles. It came on dark, and by-and-by grew very dark, for it was cloudy. How bright the fire looked, while all around it seemed a black wall. We piled in the wood; and now and then we would throw a blazing brand off into the darkness, to keep off, as Will said, the "lucivees." They call the Canada Lynx a lucivee. There were lots of them about; we didn't get sight of them very often, but saw by the track mornings where they had come up pretty near the fire the night before, to see us. We were not much afraid of them, though, for they rarely touch any one, for all they are such fierce-looking chaps. But as it grew late, and was so very dark, we began to feel more scary than usual.

There was a story going the rounds just then of a catamount's being in the vicinity, that leaped twenty-five feet from tree to tree. Everybody phooed at it; but it is one thing to phoo at such a story, and quite another to keep it out of your mind when you're off in the night!

It had got to be about eleven o'clock, I think; we had just turned the last of the cold sap into the "heater," when all at once there came a most unearthly scream, a long lonely screech, so near and startling that we almost jumped into the kettles.

"O! it's that catamount!" whispered Will; and ere he could say it, there came another cry, seemingly from the treetops overhead. "He's watching us! he'll spring down! Let's get behind the kettles!" exclaimed Will, breathlessly. And together we crouched on the further side of the arch, almost into the fire, amid the steam-clouds which gushed up from the boiling syrup.

Screech after screech followed, as we lay there trembling, expecting every moment to see the terrible form of the catamount shoot down from the dark treetops. I don't know how long we endured it, but it seemed an age. We began to get provoked in our suspense.

"By gracious, Jed!" exclaimed Will, at last. "Swallowed or not, I'll not lie here. I'm going to have a look at him."

Some long poles were within reach, and a plenty of birch bark, such as we kindled the fires with. Will lighted a piece, and fixing it on the end of a pole, thrust it slowly upward. Slowly it rose, lighting up the branches. And lo! upon the limb of a great maple, standing near, stood a little *screech-owl*! one of the genuine shrieking sort. Any one who has ever heard one will not wonder that we mistook it for something bigger.

I don't know whether we felt more glad or mad; but we certainly felt relieved. He bristled up at the torch, and shrieked again.

"O, that's played out!" cried Will. "Your little game's up now. You've had your day, now it's our turn. Here, Jed, take the torch and hold it before his eyes; the light bothers him. Blind him with it. I'll take another pole and knock him down."

I put the torch up within a few feet of him, and Will gave him a whack on his great round head that brought him tumbling down.

"Little scamp!" cried Will. "Chuck him under the kettles."

I caught him up, as he lay fluttering on the snow, but he instantly set his sharp talons into the palm of my hand. I had on a thick sheepskin mitten, but they went right through that, and scratched my hand pretty deep. I got my hand out of the mitten; he held on to it, however, in spite of all the choking I could give him. I didn't want to burn up my mitten, and while we were trying to get it out of his claws, it occurred to us to keep him a while. So "getting the mitten" proved his salvation, as it has many a chap's before him.

I tied my old pocket-handkerchief over his head; then we tied his legs, and laid him down to wait our motions. We didn't hear any more catamounts that night! While we were fooling with him, the kettles "went over" and put out the fire. We never finished boiling till three o'clock in the morning, and it was an hour later when we got to the house. Mother had worried and worried; she and Tom were just starting off after us. The owl explained the delay. We threw him into the woodhouse chamber to pass the remainder of the night, and get over his headache as best he might. We didn't think him entitled to much clemency or consideration. I think we didn't get up very early Sunday morning.

During the day the Edwards boys came in to hear how we came out with our night job. Their older brother Addison, then at home on a vacation, came with them. Of course, we told them of the owl, omitting the part behind the kettles. They wanted to see him, so we brought him down and took the handkerchief off his head, at which he rolled his great yellow eyes around in much amazement.

"O ho!" said Addison; "a little *Strix*, *flammea*." I think he said *flammea*. I know 'twas *Strix*, for after that we always called him "Little *Strix* the Screecher."

All through the spring we kept him in that old chamber a prisoner. It was a great place for mice, and he was a great mouser in his way; so he managed to pick up a very fair living, probably. We made no use of the chamber; and after the first few days nobody went near him, or ever troubled themselves about his wants. If he had starved nobody would have cared. He had no friends; he didn't begin right. Rain and snow used to beat through the roof, and if he found any necessity for drink he took what came through the cracks, and made much of it.

He didn't allow us to entirely forget him, however; for such hootings and dismal cries as used occasionally to proceed from his lodgings, would have got the place the name of being haunted, from any one not in the secret.

After the warm weather began, in June, we opened the window, thus giving him liberty to go or stay. He chose to stay; he had got wonted to the place and liked it. His method of life was to mope all day under the eaves, in the darkest corner, and sally out nights for food. Just after nightfall we would hear him begin to hoot and screech, and in a few minutes he would make his appearance on the window sill, roll his eyes, flap his wings, and give a few extra hoots. After these preliminaries he would launch out, and flit in noiseless circles around the buildings, catching a bat or two, by way of putting an edge to his appetite, then start off on a regular hunt.

On one or two occasions we gave him a big dinner of mice and "chipmunks." Instead of tearing them in pieces, and eating in a sensible way, like a hawk or a crow, he just opened his big mouth and gobbled them down at one gulp. But he always fared the worse for such bolting, for an hour or so after he would have a sick stomach, and then up would come all the skins and bones in little

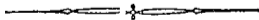
balls. The floor of his house was covered with these dried pellets.

One night a cat, belonging to one of the neighbors, made him a call just as he was coming out on his evening rambles. We did not see the fight that followed, but hearing a most outrageous uproar, ran out in time to see the strange cat leap down from his window, closely pursued by Strix, with hoots of triumph.

After that he was down on cats, and would not allow one on his roof or in the yard by

night. Perhaps he was jealous of their musical powers! No need of that, though; he was far ahead of them.

About the middle of September he disappeared suddenly. We never knew what became of him. But Addison Edwards and one of his college friends were in the neighborhood then, shooting birds to stuff for their "collection;" and Will thinks that's what became of Strix. I should like to see their collection. It would be just like Add to have done it; but we never knew.



LIVING WATERS.

BY MRS. M. A. BATES.

It was not surprising that Richard Fairlawn should be an atheist, for his parents, who had died in his childhood, had gone down to their graves with no divine warmth breaking their lifelong belief that God was a myth, and that even as death lays waste the body, so it would destroy the immortal soul. With this dark fear in their hearts, they all their lives had shrunk from thoughts of that hour which must lay its chill claim upon us all. They had sipped eagerly at the fount of human pleasure, thinking thus to dispel the haunting reminder, and satisfy the cravings which always dwell in that heart seeing only vacancy beyond this earth. But the tempting waters misted away as they drank, leaving their souls as heated and desiring as ever. Their son, possessing both their principles and splendid fortune, had pursued the same deceitful mirage—longing for he knew not what, and embittering an otherwise good and perfect life in dreading death, and in condemning all things of a sacred character. He would sit in costly attire at the windows of his regal home, curling his lip contemptuously as he viewed the crowds which thronged into the church over the way, and wonder how they could

be such fools as to worship and believe that which they had never seen.

Richard Fairlawn had a noble mind; his features were attractive, and, when not in his cynical moods, few could excel him in courteousness or gentlemanly bearing. And then his heart was generous and feeling. Did he meet a little child, suffering from cold or hunger, it would immediately be well fed and warmly clad; coal, barrels of flour, and other comforts, intruded themselves unexpectedly upon the suffering poor, whose hearts thrilled out blessings upon their unknown benefactor; while the hard-pushed merchant or mechanic well knew where to borrow money without feeling humiliated. So noble, so kind, but walking without the lamp that brings such joy, and peace, and hope to the believer. Christians looked pityingly upon Richard, and fervently prayed that the time might come when his soul would welcome and drink of the waters theirs had found so satisfying and sweet. None dared, however, to talk with him upon the great subject, as it was known that he instantly repelled such efforts.

It was singular that Richard Fairlawn did not marry; for, although his one great

falling was generally known, there were many beautiful and attractive women among those with whom he associated who evinced, by their delighted acceptance of his society, that it would not require much urging, should he propose to them to become his wife. But he resolved to remain single, fancying that he would be happier so. He would thus have more time to himself, to muse and read his myriad books, or pursue his charities, and the endless amusements which helped to absorb his time.

He was nearly forty years old, when, in one of his changing notions, he broke up his splendid establishment, sold its furniture, and set his old housekeeper adrift with a liberal pension. These movements were made because he had taken it into his head that it would be very pleasant to board at the good Widow Greeley's, whose house, shaded by elms and willows, stood in the suburbs of the city, and commanded a beautiful view of Rosebloom Valley, with its gothic cottages and artistic grounds. Mrs. Greeley's house was always sure to have a full complement of boarders, for she made it so elegant and homelike, that, connected with her genial motherly ways, it proved a noted attraction.

Now, the widow, in an ecstasy at the prospect of having the envied millionaire as her boarder, was thrown into a great flutter. Carpets came up in a trice in the apartments which Mr. Richard Fairlawn had blandly chosen for his accommodation, and new ones, radiant in perfect design and in the most beautiful of flowers, were substituted; while such pictures and ornaments as his æsthetic tastes were supposed to approve were displayed upon the walls and mantel. Mrs. Greeley wished to do everything in her power to merit the round sum which Richard voluntarily proposed to pay for his board, and which was twice the amount she had thought of asking. So Mr. Fairlawn became ensconced in his new abode, feeling quite complacent and happy with the novel change.

His library had been placed near the two great windows commanding Rosebloom Valley; and here he would sit and read, enjoying the beautiful summer weather and the sweet valley, or wondering who occupied that corn-colored cottage, situated across the lawn from Mrs. Greeley's.

He had not as yet been able to see any of its inmates—the blinds, as it was hot weather, being always closed. Yet, ever since his coming to his new home, he had heard, many times a day, the most violent scolding and commands issue from the cottage; and from the musical grieved tones which usually responded, he felt that it must be a woman—a very young one—who bore these rough reproaches. He felt ashamed to listen; but the fascination of that low clear voice made him often linger at his window, longing for those blinds to open, and reveal the face of the one who had so interested him.

"But, pahaw! I am a simpleton to trouble myself about such matters!" he would declare, as he vainly strove to subdue his new curiosity; "though I can't help pitying that girl," he mused, "whoever she is; for a stage-driver talks more gently to his horses than those people do to her."

It was on the sixth day of his residence at Mrs. Greeley's that the longed-for face became visible to Mr. Fairlawn. The blinds at the cottage were wide open, and the golden sunlight fell in prismatic fire upon the girl's soft chestnut hair, as she sat at the window of what was probably the kitchen. Her attention was earnestly absorbed in a little volume that lay open upon the sill; and Richard, nearly hidden behind his damask curtains, had a good opportunity to view the thin sad face, with its small childlike mouth and full intellectual brow.

"O," thought Fairlawn, charmed in spite of himself, "that is the most beautiful countenance I ever saw! yet how very, very pitiful it looks—and old—though she cannot be over seventeen, she is so small. I might have known," he pondered, "that the sweet voice which has so interested me belongs to her. She cannot be related to those who so abuse her—Halloo!—that must be one of the wretches who—"

He stopped short, with his face full of sudden indignation, his hands clenched, as he contemplated the scene just beginning at the window where the girl sat. Two great red hands fastened themselves upon her delicate shoulder, while the voice of their rough owner bawled out, as she jerked the young girl from her chair:

"Ye lazy jade, what yer settin' there for, when the hens aint fed nor the dishes washed! Ye haint arnt yer salt since I

took ye from the almshouse. Give me that Bible!"

Unconscious of Richard's observation, the girl put the book quickly behind her, and said, imploringly:

"O Mrs. Grant, do not deprive me of this blessed treasure! My head ached so bad that I had to rest from working a little. Be merciful, I—"

"I'll have that Bible, ef I hev ter tear ye in pieces gettin' on't!" interrupted her mistress, as she fiercely sprang upon her, and wrenched it from the thin white hands. "There!" as she tossed the book into some place invisible to Fairlawn; "now ye'll find more time to work, I guess."

"Jest what ye orter done long ago, wife," chimed in a masculine voice, which Richard had before heard roughly addressing the young girl.

As for the latter, she stood, as it seemed, with her soul in her clear eyes, and with her thin face paler than marble, regarding the one who had robbed her of her Bible.

"May God forgive you for burning my last comfort, and the last gift of my dear mother," she said, slowly and impressively, to her persecutors, who could not help cowering for an instant before the pure noble glance of this scorned one.

But the next moment an angry flush burned upon Mrs. Grant's leathery cheek.

"Go 'long ter work!" she cried, furiously. "I wont have another word of yer pious gab!"

The pity and surprise of Richard Fairlawn, as the girl turned, without a word, and limped away, almost made him groan aloud:

"She's a cripple, then? Poor, poor child!" he murmured, with a big lump in his throat. "And how meekly she obeyed that coarse woman's order!" He drew away from the window to hide his agitation. "I'll find out who that girl is, and how she is connected with those brutish people," mentally vowed Fairlawn.

Concealing his emotion, he descended into the parlor, where Mrs. Greeley was chatting with her boarders.

"I would like to speak with you alone," he smilingly whispered, declining the luxurious chair she rolled towards him.

Accordingly, the next moment they were standing alone in the deserted breakfast-room, just beyond. Richard briefly related

the occurrence he had witnessed at the cottage, inquiring if the widow knew its inmates.

"Yes," she responded; "they moved there four years ago, and although none of the neighbors visit them, their cruelty to poor Mary Clede, who, I understand, was bound out to them in her tenth year, is well known."

"I observed that she was lame. Is it natural for her to be so?" inquired Richard, anxiously.

"Mrs. Grant pretends it is," replied the widow; "but the people hereabouts declare that the poor child's infirmity has been created by their abuse."

"I know, by that young girl's face, that her mind is pure and intelligent; and if you can suggest any plan, Mrs. Greeley, to get her from the power of those wretches, and if money is required, I will—"

"But I am afraid it will not avail to free her," interrupted the widow, smiling at his earnestness. "Mary is bound to those Grants until she is eighteen; and, from the fact that many have vainly tried for her freedom before now, I am sure they will not give her up until then."

"Yet something must, *shall* be done to make her lot less bitter," returned Richard, vehemently; quickly adding, "Could you not, my dear madam, buy her books and other comforts from time to time, and manage to get them to her some way? I will provide money for the purpose, and in abundance."

Had any other single gentleman of Mrs. Greeley's acquaintance betrayed Fairlawn's interest and generosity for the poor bound girl, the widow would have instantly pronounced him in love; but the eccentric millionaire might safely do this, and not provoke such a thought. She regarded his sympathy for Mary Clede only as one of the many humors of his generous heart, and willingly agreed to his request, for the sorrows and desolation of the young girl had long ago aroused her indignation and pity.

When Mrs. Greeley carried the presents to Mary, a few days later, she found, to her surprise, that Mrs. Grant was very willing for her drudge to receive them, saying, as she grimly viewed the pretty articles of clothing in the package before her:

"Much obliged to ye, Miss Greeley.

They'll save me layin' out any more money on the jade."

But when her lynx eyes spied a little pile of books under the dress-goods she frowned darkly, declaring to the overjoyed Mary that it would not be well for her to neglect her work to read them. It was not until the termagant overheard the kind widow's whispered explanation to Mary, that she was undeceived in the supposition that she was the donor of these rich gifts. Poor Mary! She had to bear many cutting remarks and insinuations after this—her persecutors maintaining that so wealthy a gentleman as Fairlawn could have no other than dishonorable motives in being thus free and liberal towards a pauper like herself. Yet Mary, remembering the high praises of Mrs. Greeley, resolved not to mind these taunts, and henceforth, modestly returning Richard's respectful salutations from his open window, learned to regard him as a kind father. She felt, with many thrills in her lone heart, that she had now indeed a friend; but why had he, rich, admired and envied, interested himself for one poor and despised like herself? She cast shy glances at his noble face, as he sat absorbed in his reading at the great bow-windows at Mrs. Greeley's; and her soul, yearning to love something, went out with a tender and revering affection towards him.

By the aid of Mrs. Greeley, Richard continued from time to time to make poor Mary happy with such presents as he thought might tend to cheer and lighten her spirits.

The attic window of Mrs. Grant's cottage faced those of Mr. Fairlawn's apartments. And often when he returned hither late at night, he saw a light there; and felt that Mary was enjoying the books which he had sent her, for he well knew that none of the family save herself would occupy the lonely attic.

One day Mary was standing at the open door of the cottage, and had just responded to Richard's kind salutation, when Mrs. Grant fiercely ordered her away, forbidding her to speak to the one of whom she had lately become so jealous, notwithstanding Fairlawn's liberality had benefited her as much as it had poor Mary, for he generally appropriated a part of his beautiful gifts to herself. Many weeks passed away, and Mary continued invisible to her

anxious friend at Mrs. Greeley's. Now that Fairlawn was denied the sight of the young girl's pure pale face, he began to long for it in a way that destroyed his taste for his usual pleasures and pursuits. He tried to persuade himself that it was only a fatherly regard he felt for her; but there was something in his heart which told him, as he thought thus, that it was love, deep and immortal.

"Wherefore is this?" he would muse. "There is nothing about the child which it would be supposed could charm a man of the world like me; yet, O! I have found her beautiful voice, her pale sad face, and her marvellous patience with her hard master and mistress, very magnetical. Well, well," he would sighingly conclude, "I can never marry her; for I know, by her love for that Bible, that she cherishes the faith I scorn. Could I bear my wife to be so dissimilar to me? No! Yet I will be a father to little Mary, and provide for her after her servitude to those Grants has passed; and I—I will travel till I get over this nonsense. Forty years old and in love! Pshaw!"

Yet he went not, but still continued to watch from one dreary day to another for Mary to appear at the cottage doors or windows.

It was about midnight, on the last of August, that Richard, unable to sleep from his concernment about Mary, arose from his couch and dressed, and, with the aid of a cigar, sat down to compose himself by the open window. The pale light of the moon had enabled him to dispense with a light, but now the murky clouds swept over the moon, and made all so dark that he could not discern any object. While he thus sat, there arose in the midnight hush a voice which he knew came from Mrs. Grant's attic—Mary Clede was praying. He rose with a scoff upon his lips, but a curiosity to hear her words, and the charm of the voice he loved, made him the next instant sink back listening into his seat.

"Blessed Redeemer! Still let me drink of thy love, lest I faint by this earthly wayside, for it is that, O Lord, which restores my discouraged and bleeding heart; and lifts from all sorrow my thoughts up to the beautiful land where joy, and glory, and song live forever! Tender Father, forgive those who have long so cruelly

used me, and give me the joy of seeing them come to *Jesus*, whose affection, and patience, and mercy are eternal. O Saviour, bless with all thy power the kind man, who has been so good to me; and O, if he has never found any joy in thee, give him now the hope and happiness with which my belief in thy mercy has filled my heart. And when life has ended, guide him gently to his heavenly rest. Give me strength to endure all and suffer all, and accept me at last, in *Jesus's* name. Amen!"

Richard Fairlawn no longer heeded his cigar, but sat there in the darkness, with white face and parted lips, listening to that earnest and touching prayer. Even as sweet music inspires the proud and unquiet heart to holy breathings, so did the clear-toned petition of the poor bound girl steal in upon his rebellious soul. O, he knew now how she had gained her patience, her meekness. His scoffing at holy things, his self-reliance, stood, before her joyful trusting faith, rebuked and condemned; and when the moon pierced the dark clouds, and shone brightly into the little attic, he drew back from sight, and contemplated, in a sort of rapture, that small wan face, whose sacred light truly proclaimed that her soul was illuminated by a celestial fire—that it drank of waters divine. Perhaps his loving her so made him more easily yield to the influence of her words and look. A mighty longing was in his beating heart as he sank upon his knees, and cried out:

"O Lord God! I will disown thee no more. Henceforth and forever I will love and praise thee!"

Richard Fairlawn rose up, not inspired, but convicted, and drinking the living waters of heavenly faith and salvation.

The time of Mary Clede's servitude to the Grants had expired; and now, with her few articles of clothing tied in a bundle, she had passed from her ungenial home, out under the great willows that stood at the foot of the lane. She looked up where the stars gleamed down through the leaves, and thanked God that she was free at last! Yet a pang of sadness mingled with her new joy, for she was home-

less, and knew not whither to go. There was one whom she felt would have helped her, had she asked him, but her delicacy forbade her doing this. So, all alone, with the moon and stars shining coldly on her desolation, she sank upon the dewy grass, and groaned out a prayer that Heaven would open some earthly haven to welcome her.

"Little one! Dear Mary!"

These words were spoken with infinite tenderness. She turned in surprise, to behold Richard Fairlawn standing directly behind her, with his very heart in the eyes that were regarding her so pityingly. He could no more help clasping her to his breast than he could subdue the great love and sympathy for her which filled his soul; and something told him that she loved him in return. Then, as he held her so tightly that she could not free herself, he made known to her that he had heard her prayer in the little attic, and told her how much peace and joy it had brought him. Now he could not part with her, for he wanted her to still be his teacher of the blessed theme—to become his cherished wife. Mary's head, turned and averted, fell on his breast—she did not reply.

"Say, darling," he entreated, "that you will give me this right to shield you from the cold world—will permit me to minister to your happiness!"

Mary had been softly weeping, in her great surprise and inexpressible joy at his offer. And now, with blessings upon him, she hid her glowing face in his breast, and he was well satisfied.

So, one golden day in October, Mary, clad in beautiful attire, and adorned with diamonds, stood beside Richard Fairlawn in the splendid home he had prepared for her, and repeated the words that made her his beloved wife. The wedding guests, beholding her perfect joy, were glad with her, and admired her the more as they remembered that she had been but a poor bound girl.

And now, while Richard earnestly seeks for every means to increase Mary's health and happiness, she is gently teaching and leading him on in that faith which illumines the dark valley of death, and carries the soul triumphant to its heavenly home!

LIZZIE'S CHARITY.

BY LOUISE DUPEE.

"MAY I go into the city with Joe when he goes to carry vegetables in the morning, Aunt Mary?" said Lizzie, who was swinging herself, thoughtfully, on the back gate.

"How do you suppose he could stow you away in the wagon with all the beets, and turnips, and potatoes, and green corn, and windfalls he's got to carry?" said Aunt Mary, laughing. "Then he might make a mistake, and sell you with a peck of Jennetings. Who knows!"

"Can't I go, auntie? There's plenty of room in the wagon—there always is," pleaded Lizzie, not deigning to notice, even with scorn, the idea of her being mistaken for a rosy sun-freckled apple, though her face was not unlike one—so round and blooming, and suggestive of wholesome sweetness.

"Ask Joe," said Aunt Mary, "if he'll take you; I am willing you should go, though it's likely to be hot to-morrow, and you'd be ever so much more comfortable at home."

Lizzie's rather doubtful-looking face grew suddenly as full of sunshine as grandma's poppy bed, for Joe and she were sworn friends, and if his consent was all that was in the way, she was almost sure that her wish would be granted. However, she couldn't rest one moment until she had heard him say that she might go, and though Biddy had just blown the horn for tea, and he was already on his way into the house, she started on a full run over the fields to meet him, and tried to speak her desire without a breath left to speak in.

"Well, what's in the wind?" said Joe, wiping his good-natured red face with a huge red pocket-handkerchief.

"O Joel! Auntie says—auntie says"—she began, making a desperate effort.

"It's blasted hot," said Joe, unfeelingly. "You've got your blood all het up running so."

"That's no matter at all, but—"

After a while she found breath to tell the tale, and Joe, after teasing her a bit, by making her believe that he had no idea of taking her, though she knew it was all make believe, said yes, he could take her as well as not. He'd take her to fill up a barrel of potatoes.

Lizzie clapped her hands with delight, hurried to give grandma and grandpa the benefit of the joyful news, and then, utterly regardless of supper, ran down the street to tell her playmate Letty Harper. But it was small comfort to confide such a tale of happiness to her. She was a fine little miss, who talked a good deal about *style*, and could ride into town in her father's elegant carriage whenever she liked.

"Going to the city with Joe, in a farm-wagon full of vegetables!" said she, in a tone of disgust. "Why, I wouldn't ride down the street in it. Why don't you have him take your uncle's carriage, and leave the vegetables at home? That is funny and old-fashioned enough, though. It looks like a farm-wagon as much as the other one does almost. Why doesn't he buy a better one? Papa says that he could afford to, if he wished, but then, he says that farmers are always stingy, and he supposes that he feels you, and your grandpa and grandma a great burden to him. He says that you haven't, in reality, any claim upon him. He's only your uncle by marriage, you know."

The angry blood surged into Lizzie's face, for, young as she was, and as fond and kind as her uncle was, she felt these things keenly, and she knew that it was worrying both grandpa and grandma, so that they hadn't any peace or comfort at all, that they were obliged to depend upon their son-in-law for a shelter, and even bread to eat. Once it was not so. Grandpa was the happy proprietor of a large farm, away in a distant part of the country. It was the pleasantest farm ever seen, Lizzie thought, shut in by great purple hills that seemed to hold up the skies with their shoulders. A river ran through it in laughing haste under drooping willows, and its beanfields, and cornfields, and wheatfields were wide enough to keep one wandering all day within their limits. There were great cool fruit-laden orchards on every hand, and grandma's backyard flower-beds scented and brightened the whole neighborhood. Grandma had planted the same kind of flowers in Aunt Mary's garden, but somehow they did not seem half as bright or half as fragrant as

those on the old place. They were very happy there; grandpa seeing to his cattle, which he took such pride in, and working with the field-hands; grandma busied in her dairy, and amid her flowers and sweet-scented herbs, and so proud and happy in preserving the harvest dainties, and exhibiting her stores of butter and plump round cheeses to admiring friends; in having the family home at Thanksgiving, and sitting by her own blazing fires, on the same hearthstone that she and grandpa found so cheery in their early wedded life. As for Lizzie herself, she frolicked and danced the whole day long, and grandpa, who was so much jollier then than now, frolicked with her very often, and told funny stories, while grandma looked on with a really merry smile. You wouldn't imagine that she ever could have smiled so now. Then, when Tom came home—Tom was their only son, and a sailor—weren't there gala days! 'Such a feasting, and story-telling, and patting each other on the shoulders, and laughing and crying, all together, were never known before. They used to sit up round the fire nearly all night, seemingly unwilling to sleep one bit more of the precious time away than was absolutely necessary. But those happy days seemed like a dream now. The dear old farm was in the hands of strangers; Tom was lost at sea years ago, and grandpa and grandma looked so careworn and unhappy! They didn't have good crops one year—in fact, hardly enough for the use of the family—and grandpa was already a little in debt. Then he was taken very sick, and was sick for a long long time, and his illness, of course, made a good deal of extra expense. So, after a while, they were obliged to mortgage the farm. Tom was absent on a long voyage, but he wrote them not to be discouraged, he was coming home soon, and would make everything all right. So they weren't discouraged, but waited hopefully, and every day they said, "When Tom comes the trouble will be over."

But alas! Tom never came. The vessel he sailed in was never heard from again, and there was nothing to hope after two long years had passed. Of course it must have been lost, and whenever they thought of poor Tom, they thought of him as lying still and cold way down under the terrible waves, with all the light quenched in his brave blue eyes and his sunny brown curls. Everybody said there was nothing to hope.

After that things went from bad to worse.

Grandpa, broken down more by grief and care than old age, was too feeble to manage the farm with the skill which he had used heretofore. Servants were unfaithful, mortgage after mortgage was made upon the farm, till at last it slipped out of their hands entirely, and they were obliged to seek a shelter with Mary and her husband.

I would not have you think that Lizzie was wretched, for she was not, by any means. It was only the grief of her grandparents that shed its gloom over her. She was very young, you know, not quite twelve years old, and when Tom went away, seven years ago, she was very small. She remembered him perfectly, to be sure, and remembered the old place with fond regret; but if grandpa and grandma could only have forgotten their troubles, she would have forgotten that there was such a thing. The idea of being dependent on one who was, in reality, no relation to her, *did* trouble her, though she would never have thought of it herself. A servant thoughtlessly spoke of it once in her hearing, and now Letty had mentioned it. What right had her father to talk in that way?

There were tears in Lizzie's eyes, and she walked indignantly home, without imparting to so unsympathetic a hearer the chief object of her proposed trip to town. She had had it in her mind for a week or more, but had managed to keep silent on the subject, and had spent the most of her time watching her flower-bed, which was coming out slowly into a whole cloud of gay blossoms. It was this: One rainy day, for want of more fascinating employment, Lizzie read the weekly newspaper. She didn't very often read newspapers. When she wanted to read she read fairy-stories or her school reading-book. But she had read all the fairy-stories there were in the house until she knew them by heart, and had parsed over her reading-book until she could almost see every word in it with her eyes shut up; so, as a last resort, she took up the newspaper. It was stupid reading enough, she thought at first, but at last she stumbled upon something which interested her—a short paragraph headed, "The Flower Charity." It told of a new project which had just been gotten up by the children of the city and its suburbs, to supply the hospitals with flowers during the summer months. Then it related some little incident connected with the marine hospital, and urged every one to assist in the beautiful charity.

"I'll send some of my flowers in by Joe the very next time he goes in," thought she. "He'll be sure to take them, if I ask him to, and it will be so nice to have them do some good. Aunt Mary and Uncle Frank think that grandma's and my garden isn't of much account, and Letty laughs at it. Just as if our flowers weren't as pretty, if not ten times prettier than those in her garden, if we don't have any hothouses, nor any gardener! I'll send them to the marine hospital, because they're all sailors there, like Uncle Tom, and I like sailors better than anybody. Who knows but what there's somebody there who knew Uncle Tom?"

But it wasn't very sunshiny weather, and her sweet peas, and larkspurs, and speckled pinks were buds so long that she began to be discouraged about their blossoming, and though Joe went into town very soon she was unable to gather one single respectable bouquet to send by him; so she thought that she wouldn't say anything about it. But every day, as she watered and coaxed them, she thought of the poor sick people, especially of the sailors; and by-and-by she began to think how nice it would be to go herself, and carry them, once, at least, if Aunt Mary would only let her, and Joe would only take her. And now she was sure she might go, she was in a great state of excitement and delight, only Letty's talk about being dependent had disturbed her at the time. But she almost forgot it when she got home again, for grandma and grandpa were sitting on the porch, talking and laughing together as they used to in old times. They really seemed quite jolly. Lizzie's pet kitten was playing with a ball at grandpa's feet; Joe was whistling gayly, as he busied himself in preparing for to-morrow's journey; and Biddy, who was usually a rather melancholy specimen, and was always wishing herself back in Cor-rk, was washing her dishes by the open window, to the tune of Lanigan's Ball.

"Why didn't you come to your supper, Lizzie? the table is all cleared away," said grandma, as she came dancing up the walk.

"O, I don't want any supper," said Lizzie, breathlessly. "You can't guess what I'm going to do—where I'm going, when I go to the city with Joe to-morrow!"

"Where you're going?" said grandpa, pinching the flushed cheek playfully. "Why, you're going to the city, of course; only little girls that get so excited that they can't eat

their suppers get sick, and are not able to go anywhere."

"Yes," said grandma, "that is true. Ask Biddy to give you a bowl of bread and milk, and you can eat out here, where it is so pleasant. How sweet your pinks are."

Lizzie went reluctantly after the bowl of bread and milk, but was so eager to tell of her wonderful plans that she forgot to eat, and puss, who seemed to find a particular relish in whatever she could steal, came and dipped her little red tongue into the bowl, though the froth left in a saucer for her own supper was standing quite untouched.

"You haven't guessed what I'm going to do to-morrow yet," said Lizzie, tipping the bowl so that puss could reach its contents with more ease.

Then grandpa and grandma *did* guess several times, but of course they didn't guess right, and at last Lizzie told them that Joe was going to take her to the marine hospital, and she was going to carry every flower that was blossomed in her garden to the poor sick sailors, and asked grandma if she wouldn't give her some of hers to carry too.

Grandma was delighted with the idea, and was willing to pick her most cherished rose-popples under such circumstances, only she was afraid that Joe didn't know the way to the hospital, which was some distance from the city; that something would happen to Lizzie in the course of such a long journey, and that the old lumbering farm-wagon was by no means the right sort of a conveyance for her pet, who, according to her ideas, would have graced Cinderella's golden chariot. Grandpa was pleased with the idea, too, but of course he had a plenty of objections to offer—men always do on every occasion, you know.

Lizzie didn't sleep very well that night, and as soon as Chanticleer sent his first peal over the sleepy fields she was up, making hasty preparations for her journey, though Joe was still in dreamland, and not even a fly had begun to stir about the house. She didn't want a bit of breakfast; she couldn't eat if she were to try ever so hard, and wondered if Joe never *would* get ready to go. He said that he was going to start very early, and here it was five o'clock, and Dobbin was still coolly munching his breakfast! Grandma and Aunt Mary got up earlier than usual, to help her arrange her bouquets and see her off, and Lizzie never remembered to have seen the house in so delightful a bustle before.

The garden was as full of flowers as it could be that morning, so many buds had come out in the darkness. The kitchen table was fairly heaped with them when they were gathered, and every little bell was running over with dew.

"I wouldn't put any marigolds, or poppies, or saffron into the bouquets, they're too coarse and common," said Aunt Mary, as grandma was heaping clusters of them together.

But grandma insisted upon doing so, because, she said, there might be sailors there, like her boy Tom, who had once lived on some old country farm, and would love them for the sake of home—for where was an old farm garden that did not rejoice in marigolds, and poppies, and saffron? The sun was hardly up before they were on their way, and by nine o'clock they were in the great bustling city. Lizzie had never been there but once or twice before in all her life, so she used her ears and eyes well, while Joe disposed of his vegetables. That didn't take long, and then they drove over two long bridges to the hospital. Joe wasn't in favor of being so partial to the sailors, but thought, as they had so many flowers, they might as well take some of them to the other hospitals. But Lizzie thought otherwise. Some other time she would have flowers for all, but these she wanted the sailors to have.

The marine hospital was on a high hill over the water, and such a lovely place Lizzie never saw before. She wondered how any one could be sick there; and as they had a garden of their own, she was very much afraid that her flowers would not be valued; that, after all the pains she had taken, no good would come of the undertaking. But she was mistaken. Joe helped her out of the wagon with her flowers—a heaping basketful, a heaping apronful, and both hands as full as they could be, and thus laden she was creeping timidly toward the great entrance, when a jolly-faced old gentleman, one of the physicians, met her on the threshold.

"If you please, sir," said she, falteringly, "I brought these flowers to the sick sailors."

"Ah," said he, "this is charity indeed! real flowers—country flowers, such as I have not seen since I was a boy. Come in, my little lass, and let them see your face too. A sight of that will be worth more to them than all the blossoms."

Lizzie looked a trifle bewildered, but followed him in through the great hall, though

there was a little timid fluttering in her usually sturdy little footsteps. Joe chose to remain outside, as he was dreadfully bashful, and was never so much at home as with Dobbin.

"Here's some medicine for you," said the doctor, leading Lizzie up to a white cot at the end of a long ward, where a white worn face was looking drearily from the pillow.

The patient brightened—actually smiled—fixing his eyes wistfully on the tender rosy little face, and stretching his hand eagerly toward the flowers, which were still wet with dew, and brimming with country fragrance. He did not seem able to speak, but it was evident that his medicine was having a good effect upon him. And so it was all the way down the long clean still apartment. Almost every occupant of the row of white cots had a brighter look when the sweet-breathed flowers were placed upon their pillows, and each one wished to detain the bright child-face as long as he might by his side. One or two less weak than the others; tried to make a little talk with her, and she would tell them that the flowers had grown in her own garden, and what a nice ride she had with Joe, coming into town so early in the morning. One poor old sailor, who would never sail again, told her that she looked like his little girl at home—had just such rosy cheeks, and merry blue eyes, and sunshiny curls. Then he said he had forgotten, for the moment, but what she was there now; but she had gone to heaven years ago. Then they went through another ward with the same success, and then into a long airy room where the convalescent sailors were leaning back in their chairs, and making dreary jokes with each other. There were a good many of them. Some looked quite cheery and content, but, as a general thing, they were pale and sad. They all gave Lizzie a hearty greeting, you may be sure, and seemed quite delighted with her and her flowers.

"If I had such a little sweetheart as this on shore," said one, "I'd never go to sea again."

Lizzie blushed at this, as if she were in reality some one's sweetheart, and the moment she entered the room her heart began to beat, so that she was frightened. She couldn't think what made it do so for the world.

"Ah," said one, "my mother used to have flowers like these in her garden up in New Hampshire—merrygools, and poppies, and

sturlions, and love-in-a-mist. I haven't seen any like 'em for twenty years."

"So did mine," said another. "They used to grow at the back door, such quantities of them! and I should think they were the very same." And his eyes grew fairly moist over the homely blossoms.

Lizzie thought that there was something strangely familiar about the last speaker, a brown-bearded young man, with wide-open honest eyes, who looked thin and worn, as if by long illness.

He looked at her, too, with a puzzled searching look, as if he fancied he had seen her face somewhere before, but could not tell where.

"Come here, my little lass," he said, at last. "I want to look at you. You look like somebody I used to know, and I want to know about the posies. Where did you get them? and how did you happen to think how much we wanted to see you and them here?"

"You look like somebody I used to know, too," said Lizzie, eagerly, never heeding his question. "My Uncle Tom was a sailor, and I think you look a little like him, only he wasn't as old as you are, and didn't have any whiskers. I've seen his picture; I look at it almost every day, but I don't remember how he looked, he went away when I was so little."

"And didn't he ever come back again? What became of him?" asked the sailor, with a strange brightness and moisture in his eyes.

"No," said Lizzie, sadly, "he never came back again. He was lost at sea; and grandpa and grandma never will be happy any more, because he's dead."

"But they will be happy once more, if seeing Tom will make them so. Lizzie, tell me where they are; I've been searching the world over for them almost. Thank God they're alive!"

And he hugged the astonished little girl until she was almost breathless. She could hardly believe that it was truly Tom, but had an uncanny feeling, as if she were being hugged by a ghost. How could it be? Had the sea given up its dead? But when she got over this feeling at last she fairly danced for joy, though she was crying all the time, and Tom acted almost as much like an insane person as she did. And how delighted everybody was with the story, what they could gather of it! Tom didn't seem to be

in quite the state of mind to explain matters, so they only knew that he had found somebody whom he had supposed dead, and who had supposed him dead; and many got the impression that Tom was Lizzie's father.

All Tom wanted was to get to his father and mother, and though the physician was very doubtful about his being able to travel so far, he was determined to start at once with Lizzie and Joe in the farm-wagon.

So Joe and Dobbin were roused from their meditations by the back entrance, and for the first time in his life, Joe was speechless with amazement; also for the first and last time in his life, Dobbin kicked up his heels and was unruly behaving, like a gay young colt.

They were afraid that the sudden joy of seeing Tom alive and safe would be too much for grandpa and grandma, but they were waiting on the porch when the wagon drew up, and there was no use in trying to keep them from seeing him at once. Lizzie's little pale excited face, which greeted them first, told a story of something uncommon, as did Joe's distended eyes and distracted manner. And seeing their dear old faces, Tom could not stand it any longer, but jumped out of the wagon right into their midst, greeting them as he would have done if he had only been absent seven months instead of seven years. It would be useless to try to describe that meeting, but you may be sure that they were a happy household that night; so happy that none could think of sleeping. But they must hear Tom's story over and over again, and look in his eyes, and touch his hand, so as to be sure that it was really he; and Lizzie was blessed and caressed until she was quite embarrassed, as the means of bringing about all their happiness.

Tom's story seemed strange, but, after all, you hear of such happenings very often. The ship that he sailed in was wrecked away off near some desert coast, and of the whole crew only Tom and the mate were saved. They succeeded in clinging to some floating spars, which, after a while drifted them so near to the shore that they were able to reach it. But poor Tom, never very strong, quite exhausted by the hardships he had experienced, was taken ill at once, and was ill for a long time, as he was in a foreign country, almost destitute of inhabitants, and of course could not have had proper care. And when he did recover at last, he was in a most forlorn condition, without a cent in his

pocket—though money would not have been much aid to him in such a place—and though he waited, and waited, like Robinson Crusoe, for the sight of a sail near the dreary coast, none came, and it was more than two years before he was able to get away from this desolate region. Then the ship that took him in was an English ship bound for China, and two years more passed by before he was able to reach his native land again. When he did stand on the threshold of the old farmhouse once more, he found strange faces there, and they told him that his father and mother had moved away three years before; they could not tell where exactly, but they thought to the West.

Then he made inquiries in the village, and found that they had gone to Illinois, to live with Mary, their only daughter, and somebody had heard that they both died soon after leaving home. He started for Mary's home immediately, but on arriving there found that her family had moved too; but, as they are always coming and going so in the West, that no one could tell where they were. Then Tom went searching about for them here and there, advertising in numberless papers, in numberless places, but all in vain; and at last he gave up in despair. But in the meantime he was promoted to captain of a ship, and had just made a very success-

ful voyage; so he had quite a pocket full of money—full enough to buy the old farm back, which he did, and they all went back to it the jolliest people alive.

Grandma sits by her own cosy fireside again, in her own cosiest corner, and tends her own posy-beds by the backdoor more tenderly than ever; grandpa is growing young again, as he walks proudly over the farm, inspecting the wheat-fields, and the potato-fields, and the grass-lots, every inch of which is dear to him. 'Tom sits by his mother's side—the delight of her eyes—but is soon to start on another voyage; and Lizzie dances in and out of doors, almost beside herself with joy, to explore her old haunts again, and to see grandpa and grandma so happy.

"I never dreamed that I should live to see such a day as this again, 'Tom,'" said grandpa, coming in, his face all aglow with delight. "Where's that witch Lizzie? She always was a proper wise child, and if she hadn't gone to the hospital with her flowers, we might never have found you."

"Yes," said Tom, "if that fortunate fever hadn't seized me, and that fortunate fit of charity for the sailors hadn't seized Lizzie, and sent her to the hospital, we might never have found each other again."

LONDON AT NIGHT.

BY REV. DR. H. STANDISH.

To city men the idea of silence being connected, in any way, with the city may appear in the highest degree ridiculous. They are so used to a perpetual excitement from the time they enter it to the time they leave it; they are so infected with the everlasting bustle, the eternal jingle of money, and the unceasing roar of the worshippers of the Golden Calf, that quiet to them would mean panic, and silence bankruptcy. City men never experience silence in the city. Its silence has been broken long before they arrive at their offices in the morning, and its hum continues long after they have left in the evening. The great caldron of commerce is bubbling even before they commence their daily work, and it continues to simmer long after they have reached their mansions at South Kensington and Bayswater, or their suburban villas at Hampstead, Highgate, Lewisham, Camberwell and Denmark Hill, or their riverside retreats, anywhere you please between Putney and Windsor. They know nothing whatever of the silence of the city. This knowledge is only given to night policemen, to wakeful octogenarian city housekeepers, to bank watchmen and to housebreakers. On second thoughts, perhaps the latter class know nothing of it; they seldom go anywhere unless there is business to be done, and although they know that there are plenty of cribs worth cracking in the city, the whole place is so watched that it renders their becrackment a matter of considerable difficulty as well as danger.

The present writer, who is neither a night policeman, nor a wakeful octogenarian city housekeeper, nor a bank watchman, nor a housebreaker, recently went for a tour in the silent city. He had not been to the fancy ball at the Mansion House; neither had he been banqueting with the Most Worshipful Company of Serene Stevedores; nor had he been dining with the captain of the guard at the Bank of England; nor was he on his way back from the Guards' mess at the Tower; nor had he arrived at some unreasonable hour by a tidal train at London Bridge. He had done

none of these things, and yet there he was, no matter why, standing in front of the official residence of the Lord Mayor, just at that period when silence is beginning to steal over the city like a mist, and settle down on it like a dense fog—a fog which seems to muffle every voice, put India-rubber tires round all the wheels, tie up every knocker with white kid, shoe every horse with felt, and every passer-by with American goloshes.

I find I am particularly fortunate in the evening I have selected. There is no great civic festival going on, my meditations will not be broken by the clatter of a hundred carriages, the vapid conversations of a myriad of powdered footmen, and the flash of lights innumerable. A competitive examination in clock striking has just been held by the various steeples in the neighborhood. Every one has struck twelve according to its own time and its own tune; each in its turn strives to impress upon the silence that its own is the only right way of striking, and that it is the only regular and well-behaved clock in the neighborhood. Such an impressive way have all the chimes of doing this, that when a disgracefully laggard clock, St. Tympanum-by-the-Sideboard, rings out twelve with querulous distinctness, at least a quarter of an hour late, one is firmly convinced that it must be the steadiest and most accurate timekeeper in the city of London.

Your first thought, while standing upon the curbstone of what is, in its normal condition, the busiest centre of London, is—what can possibly have become of all the omnibuses? Do they all sleep out of town as well as the city merchants and city clerks? Where, again, are all the newspaper boys? Where are the disreputable, dirty, ragged "prisoner's friends" who always hang about the pavement when the court is sitting at the Mansion House? Is anybody left in that mysterious cell under the dock, from which the prisoner emerges like a jack-in-the-box, and to which he retires, also like a jack-in-the-box, when the chief magistrate puts the lid down with a sentence of six months' hard labor? Is

any one there, and if so, what is he thinking about? Is he determining, in his own mind, to turn over a new leaf, and so one day to become Lord Mayor of London? The clocks are commencing another competitive examination, and St. Tympanum-by-the-Sideboard, which, by the way, does not shine at all in striking the quarters, is being run hard by St. Thomas Tiddlerius, and we have no time for idle speculation; so take my arm, gentle reader, and let us cross the road. In the daytime we would not venture to do this unless we had previously insured our lives heavily in the Accidental, but now we could roll about the road, or play a game of hopscotch in it, if we forgot our dignity in the darkness and stillness of the night. Let us coast round the Bank, and dance gayly over the heaps of treasure that are buried beneath our feet. I wonder it has never occurred to some of those energetic people who are always pulling up the roadway under the excuse of gas, water or paving, to make a secret burrow under the Bank, hoist up treasure in buckets of mud, and carry it away in mudcarts, till the governor and company of the Bank of England awakened some fine morning and found themselves bullionless. I protest I should like to wander about the interior of the Bank—with no burglarious intention, let it be distinctly understood—and see the temple of the Golden Calf in its silence, when its high priests were asleep. I should like to wander through the three per cent office when all the books were closed, when the brisk young clerks who are so particular about signatures were asleep, and when the imbecile old ladies, with money in the funds, were dreaming of the perils they had gone through in being knocked about from beadle to clerk, and from clerk to beadle, in the pursuit of dividend; to see the parlor with all the chairs tenantless, the entrances beadleless, and the rotunda silent as the grave. Are there any clerks left in charge all night? If so, I take it for granted that they sleep upon mattresses of dividend warrants, and lay their heads upon pillows of crisp bank notes. Possibly the wraith of Mr. Matthew Marshall, accompanied by a ghostly bearer, rises now and then to haunt these unfortunate watchers with demands impossible to be satisfied. Who shall say? It is certain that few things look more inscrutable and

adamantine, and none less sympathetic, than the outer walls of the Bank of England in the dead of night.

Let us glance at the Grocers' Hall as we go by—which looks like a well-endowed Dissenters' chapel in the dim light, and as if excellent dinners and superb wines had never been consumed within its precincts—and turn down Lothbury. There is not a soul stirring besides ourselves, and the stock-brokers' cab-stand in Bartholomew Lane is untenanted. We turn up Capel Court; there is no bellowing of bulls, nor growling of bears now; our footsteps re-echo with such startling distinctness that we turn round sharply, thinking we are being followed, and that there are other prowlers about besides ourselves. The flags themselves look so innocent of speculation and jobbery, so full of good intentions, that they might serve as paving-stones to that quarter, to which the descent, according to classical authority, is so easy. As for the portals of the Stock Exchange itself, they appear to be closed so tightly that you wonder how it will be possible for them to be opened again at the proper time to-morrow morning. "The House," indeed, looks so serious, so dignified, so severely respectable, that it might be the Tomb of the Stocks, the sepulchre of shares, a mausoleum for bubble companies. One can hardly realize the fact that in a dozen hours' time these doors will be everlastingly on the swing; that a roaring, frantic, anxious crowd will be tearing up and down the worn steps; and that whatever there may be within the walls of our mausoleum will be galvanized into feverish and frantic life. As we turn to leave this dismal court we hear a species of Gregorian chant being dismally crooned, on a fourth-rate concertina, somewhere up on the top floor. What is the meaning of this? Is there an asylum for demented jobbers in this quarter, or is it the "sweet little cherub who sits up aloft and keeps watch o'er the life of poor Stock," who is giving this melancholy performance?

We take our way to the Royal Exchange, for we would fain see what goes on here at the witching hour of night. Do the merchants of long ago troop down here after twelve o'clock and whisper spectral quotations, and conclude phantom bargains? Does the ghost of Sir Thomas Gresham perambulate the French, American, Span-

ish, Portuguese, German, Greek and Dutch walks, attended by sprites in the form of gigantic grasshoppers frisking and chirruping gleefully? We pass in at the principal entrance. We notice the doorway to Lloyd's closed hard and fast, as if Lloyd were dead, and all the underwriters had gone out of town to attend his funeral, or as if Mr. Plimsoll's agitation had made the insurance of ships illegal, and Lloyd—who, by the way, is, or was, Lloyd?—had closed his establishment in despair. We peer through the ornate iron gate at the entrance to the quadrangle. The whole place is dark and deserted. There is not even a beadle to break the monotony of the view; we can just catch a glimpse of the lights in front of the Mansion House winking and glittering through the western gate on the other side. A cold blast comes whirling through the elaborate gates; it chills us—we walk briskly away across Cornhill and enter Change Alley. We pause beneath the shadow of Garraway's, and think how the neighborhood must be haunted with the uneasy spirits of the mad dabblers in the South Sea Bubble. There is a light in the windows of a banking-house giving on the alley. What is going on? Are fraudulent directors cooking accounts, or is it merely a staff of hard-worked clerks "on the balance?" It is neither the one nor the other. It is simply some men whitewashing the interior of the office. You see time is so precious in the city that they cannot afford to sacrifice even a moment for cleanliness and beautification. Hence bankers are compelled to do their work by day, and their washing by night. The whitewashers do not seem to like their job; they are depressed; they do not whistle blithely, and slap the ceiling merrily after the usual fashion of healthy whitewashers. They do their work stealthily, as if whitewashing were a capital offence, and they were afraid of being discovered every moment. We jump up and tap playfully at the window; the whitewasher starts and peers anxiously in the direction of the noise; he looks scared, and no doubt thinks he has seen the ghost of Mr. Secretary Craggs, Sir John Blunt, or any one of the wild speculators who flourished a century and a half ago. Out into Lombard Street—Lombard Street, dark, sad and silent. There are no anxious crowds jostling one another, no doors continually on

the swing, like popular gin-shops in a low neighborhood, as happy mortals plunge wildly in to drink of the Pactolean fount; no rustle of bank notes, no auriferous jingle of sovereigns, no pleasant song with the refrain of "Owlyeravit." This happy hunting-ground of Thomas Tiddler might just as well be the Great Desert of Sahara, for all the use it would be to me at the present moment if I wanted to get a check cashed. Why should banking operations be confined to the hours between nine A.M. and four P. M., and why should not bankers have a clerk for nocturnal duty, on the principle of the innkeepers, who have a porter up all night? Supposing I were to ring the bell and present a properly signed check, at one of these banks, is it likely that some ancient housekeeper would come down with a weird cloak thrown over her nightdress, and give me the change? I think it is far more likely that the night watchman would awake suddenly from his slumber, and that I should find myself without delay in charge of the nearest policeman.

The silence increases. We can hear distinctly the measured tread of the policeman at the other end of the street, and we feel compelled to speak in whispers, in order that he may not overhear our conversation. There is no one about, there are no roysterers and no revellers; the thunder of late trains has entirely died away, and the thunder of early ones has not commenced. In the whole length of Fenchurch Street we encounter but one person, and he is a stalwart Irish gentleman who has charge of some works in connection with pulling up the roadway, or illuminating an ancient lantern, or keeping a very black cutty pipe in full blast, we cannot tell exactly which. Mincing Lane, gayest and most varied of the many retreats of commerce, is the most deserted and dismal quarter we have yet visited, and we shudder as we see our faces reflected in ghostly fashion in the vast plate glasses of the office windows, as we pass by. The most curious part is that there is no sign, no vestige of the vast business conducted here, remaining. Who would ever dream of the sales of every description that are going on in this lane daily? Of rice, of sugar, of pepper, of nutmegs, of cinnamon, of tea, of coffee, of indigo, of hides, of ginger, of logwood, of shellac, of gum Benjamin, of myrabolams,

of nutgalls, and a hundred other articles of which particulars are given in catalogues which look like serious playbills run to seed. Not a sign of any of these things is to be seen. We can gaze right into some of the offices, and see that they seem to be swept and cleared, as if they were going to be let to-morrow morning. The dismal passage by the Commercial Salerooms looks more dismal than ever, as we gaze through the iron gate and note the one lamp fitfully flickering in what appears to be the entrance to some third-rate baths. We drift into Mark Lane, and find there the silence to be even more intense; we can distinctly hear the tick of a clock within a house as we pass by. We gaze through the windows of the Corn Exchange; it looks like a bankrupt railway station, about to be converted into a literary institution. The stands seem as if they were going to be transformed into reading-desks and newspaper slopes, and there is not so much as a grain of corn to be seen anywhere on the premises. We become objects of suspicion to a policeman, who evidently thinks we want to break into the Corn Exchange; we move on, and descend a somewhat steep and tortuous lane, and find ourselves in Thames Street. Here we are in a region of cellar-flaps, which groan dismally or wheeze asthmatically, in different keys, as we pass over them. We turn our faces westward and pass the Custom House. It looks as if the freest of free trade had been established; as if all duties, inwards and outwards, were entirely abolished, and the whole building converted into one vast *creche* for poor children, in which all the inmates went to bed at seven o'clock. There are no lights to be seen except in a couple of windows on the top floor. Who is this burning the midnight gas, I wonder? Is it a surveyor-general, an inspector-general, a comptroller of accounts, a landing waiter, a searcher, or a jerquer? I have rather an idea that it must be a jerquer. I have not, of course, the least notion what a jerquer is; except that he must be something very mysterious, and, I should opine, more likely than any one else to carry on his operations at two in the morning. We meet a dilapidated chiffonier, who is grubbing about among the rubbish heaps, and he is evidently very much scared at finding two tolerably respectable-looking individuals on his own ground so early in the

morning. We pass through Billingsgate Market, but we are too early; there is no one astir yet; but the bright light glimmering in the upper windows of a certain famous hostelry, close to the river, indicates that in an hour's time the place will be busy enough. In Darkhouse Lane we meet an individual, something between a decayed merman and a pinchbeck Diogenes, who is carrying a lantern, and talking to himself, and under the church of St. Magnus we meet a misanthropic scavenger who is talking to his horses something about "Hullywhoop," These are the only persons we encounter. And yet, in a little while, this thoroughfare will be crammed with wagons, porter will jostle porter, and each vie with the other in the depth and variety of his oburgations. There will be shouting and screaming; there will be a loading and unloading of merchandize; warehouse doors will be thrown open; shops will display their wares, and the whirr and whiz of the crane will be heard without ceasing. And yet, at the present moment, it is as quiet and deserted as the back street of a small cathedral town. There are noisome odors as of decomposed fish, of decayed fruit, and of bilge water. There is an irritating dust containing splinters of straw, which our friend the scavenger has distributed in the ardor of his occupation. Let us go up the steps on to London Bridge, and see if we can get a breath of fresh air.

Up the dirty, greasy, disreputable steps we pick our way gingerly. There we find one or two poor creatures, one or two poor women in rags, sleeping so soundly, enjoying a few hours' fitful oblivion, only to wake up and find life more wretched than ever. Tread softly, hush your voice; do not let us take away the small scrap of comfort that oblivion alone can give. The bridge is almost deserted, for the scavengers have finished their work; there are no vehicles on it, so you have every chance of crossing without seeing the proverbial gray horse. There is a policeman on one side of the way and a young lady in a red shawl on the other, and one or two shapeless masses—it is hard to say to which sex they belong—crouch on the stone seats here and there. We find a seat that is untenanted, and we lean over the parapet, and gaze down stream at the lights winking in the dark night, and glittering in the

black river as it hurries to the sea. Far away down the Pool can we trace them; down past the Tower, through the groves of masts and the tangle of cordage, past the forest of Dockdom, the picturesque shore of Wapping, and as far as Limehouse can we see the tiny glitter of lamps, like fallen stars in the distance. Here and there we notice a red or a green light, marking the situation of some pier or station; there are no busy boats about, no fussy penny steamers to break the ceaseless swirl of the dark river as it hurries away from the silent city. There is nothing to check the monotonous rush of its onward course. Stay, what is that black mysterious boat that is hovering about, and shattering the long lines of lamp reflections? Is it the police boat? Or is it the craft of some aquatic burglar? What is it that they are towing astern? They

break the silence of the night by shouting. There is some sign of life on board the Hull steamer at Fresh Wharf; there is a clanking of chains, and a faint steam issuing from her funnel; a heavy wagon has just lumbered over the bridge in the direction of the Borough Market, and a couple of cabs have clattered along in the opposite direction; there are sounds as of the shunting of carriages, and bumping of turn-tables in the Cannon Street station. The spell is broken. Here comes an empty hansom. Let us jump into it, and drive home, for in a little while the city will be no longer silent, but will wake up to that feverish anxiety of speculation, to the everlasting fighting and struggling for so much per cent, to trade, to barter, to profit and to loss, which will last as long as commerce lives, and until enterprise retires from business.

LOST AND FOUND.

BY EMMA GARRISON JONES.

MARGUERITE was her name, but we called her Little Pearl, Philip and I. She was our first baby, the daintiest, dearest, little thing that ever you set eyes on; cheeks like half-blown rosebuds, hair like rings of sunshine, and eyes as blue as the depths of a June sky. Darling little Pearl, how we loved her. We had been married just a year and a half, when Philip caught the Western fever. Philip was my husband, you know, tender, and true, and devoted, and so noble and handsome that my eyes filled with tears of fond pride whenever I looked at him. But he was an ambitious man, a man who aspired to set his mark high in the world. I don't think I fully sympathized with him in those days of our early wedded life; we had been so differently raised, Philip and I, and our natures were so widely dissimilar.

He was a New England man, a keen thinker, and an untiring worker, with a will as strong and unyielding as the granite of his native hills; while I was a lover of my ease, an indolent Southern woman, who had been reared in the very lap of affluence and luxury, and in the midst of warm, tropical beauty. Previous to the time of my marriage, my life had never known a care or a sorrow.

I loved my husband with an intensity bordering on idolatry, but when he told me of his intention to leave our beautiful cottage, and seek his fortune in the far West, it was a terrible blow to me. We had lived at Rosedale ever since our marriage, and I could see no reason why we should not continue to live there. Truly the place belonged to my uncle, but then it would be ours at his death, and why should Philip fret and chafe so under a foolish sense of dependence? We had everything, elegant rooms, flowers, birds, pleasure-grounds, and servants enough to keep our hands from anything like labor, and uncle gave it all ungrudgingly, still my husband was not content.

"I can't live this life, Belle," he said, "I wasn't made for it. My work awaits me somewhere in the world, and I must hunt it up. My little ones won't respect their father by-and-by, if he is nothing more than a drone in the hive of life."

The idea of a man going out to hunt up his life-work seemed to me, who from day to day sought only to avoid work and to pass my hours, in luxurious leisure, utterly preposterous. I laughed at first, and then I wept and expostulated, but ridicule, tears, and expostulations were alike unavailing. My husband had a will of iron.

"I am sorry, Belle," he said, "that you cannot see as I do, but I know my duty, and must do it, despite the pain it gives me to act in opposition to your wishes."

I was vexed and angry at first, and said a great many things that were unwise and unwomanly, but Philip pursued the even tenor of his way, all patience and forbearance. Our preparations were soon made, the few things we held most precious were packed up, and bidding adieu to our sunny Southern home, we started Westward.

The excitement of the journey, together with my husband's constant tenderness and encouragement, reconciled me in a measure to the change in my life; and when we reached our little Western cottage, my impulsive nature, always rushing to one extreme or the other, carried me into an ecstacy of delight and anticipation, even beyond anything my steadfast husband exhibited. But he seemed greatly relieved to see me growing so thoroughly contented, and we began our new life very bravely.

The cottage was comfortable enough, but bare and humble in comparison to what we had hitherto been accustomed; the square, white-washed rooms had a dreadfully forlorn look, and the little kitchen, with its one staring window, and the cooking-stove standing in the middle of the floor, filled me with shuddering disgust every time I entered it. But I had made up my mind to endure all and everything, and as I have said, we began our new life very bravely.

For the first two or three months I had help, not very efficient help truly; but better far than none. Philip entered at once upon the practice of law, and as his office was some distance from home he did not return until evening, so we had no great amount of cooking to do, and between us, we managed to

keep the cottage tidy, and to take care of Little Pearl.

Looking back through the hazy mist of long departed years, those early days of my Western life seem infinitely happy. They were autumn days, and the great prairies rolled out before our door like seas of billowy gold, and the distant river lapsed and murmured between its flowery banks, with a music as soothing as a mother's lullaby.

Philip was all life and hope; his eye was like an eagle's, his brow crowned with perpetual sunshine. The ambition and aspiration of his life were about to win success; the consummation of all he hoped and wished for was within his grasp.

Every afternoon we went to meet him, taking Little Pearl, through the grand and gorgeous prairies, and as often as his happy eyes caught sight of us he would hasten forward with fond embraces and approving words.

"Ah, Belle," he would say, "I believe I am the happiest man in the universe, and you are growing contented, too, dear—I can see it in your bright face."

I ought to have been contented, I surely must have been, despite the influences of my false training; looking back at those days, it seems to me that they must have fled by like a dream of bliss, yet the seeds of discord, and self-love, and indolence were still in my heart, ready to spring up and bear fruit at any moment. It is a mistaken kindness in friends to rear their children as I was raised; better by far, is it to push them out into the fierce storms of life, and teach them that it is God's command that they shall earn their bread in the sweat of their brow.

I linger along my life-path here, dreading to go forward, for beyond these sunny days of hope and promise lies the blackness of darkness, the gulf of sorrow and despair which opened like a yawning tomb across our way.

The glory of autumn faded, and the chill November rains set in, bringing dreary, sunless days, and changing the gorgeous prairie-bloom into endless leagues of sodden gray. My girl left me, and Little Pearl grew cross and fretful in her teething. In addition to his law business, Philip had gone into farming, and we had two or three laborers to feed and lodge, which greatly increased the housework. Under this accumulation of trials my patience began to give way. I worked late and early, but I grew morose and fretful, and

never had a pleasant word for my husband. But he never complained.

"Poor Belle," he would say, "poor, overworked little wife, be as brave as you can—better days will come by-and-by. Just as soon as I can get off from my business, I'll go to the city and obtain permanent help. In the meantime, don't fret the roses from your cheeks and the brightness from your eyes."

But despite my husband's loving words and constant help, for he took one half the household labor on his own hands, I continued to murmur at my fate, and one morning the crisis came.

A dreadfully desolate morning, the clouds rolling down to the very river brink, in ragged, leaden masses, and a penetrating, misty rain dripping, dripping with a ceaseless, wearisome patter. Everything seemed to go bad with me that morning. Breakfast was unusually late, Little Pearl cross to absolute fretfulness, and the sick laborer up stairs in need of constant attention. Philip was obliged to leave early, and after coaxing and hushing Pearl to sleep, I laid her in her dainty little crib, and went about my morning's work. And there was plenty of it to do; dishes to be cleaned and put in order, baby's clothes to wash, and the rooms to be cleared of the black prairie-mud that stuck to the floors in huge cakes. To increase my vexation, and to render everything more comfortless, the sudden gusts of wind that came sighing from the east, brought the smoke and ashes from the stove in great blinding puffs.

I went to work, heart and head both throbbing with absolute misery; and through all the gloom, and smoke, and discomfort, bright glimpses of my girlhood's old home coming back to me like visions in a beautiful dream, I felt wronged and injured, and while I worked away, dusting off the soot and ashes, and scrubbing up the mud, the hot tears fell so fast as almost to blind me. My husband had been cruel, heartless, I thought, to tear me from a home where all was beauty and pleasure, and bring me to that dreadful place to wear my life out in hateful drudgery. I would sooner be in my grave than to live on so from year to year.

In the midst of this outburst of egotistic despair, I heard the sick man calling from above, and dropping my scrubbing-brush, hurried up to him. His fever was rising again, he needed cooling draughts, and ice-cloths to his head. I went to work to prepare them, trembling with nervous haste, for

the morning was slipping by, and the noon meal must be in readiness for the farming-hands. In the midst of my work and hurry, Little Pearl's sharp, imperative cry came piping from below. What should I do? I had just spent over half an hour lulling her to sleep, and here she was on my hands again.

"I won't go down," I cried, in real anger. "She may have her cry out—O dear, I wish I had no baby!"

But the instant the unwomanly wish had passed my lips, I repented of having uttered it. No baby, no Little Pearl! The bare thought filled me with shuddering terror. Hurriedly administering the sick man's potion, I hastened down, eager to compensate for my unmotherly words by fond caresses. There stood the little cradle in its accustomed corner, the dainty lace coverlid thrown back, the pillow still damp and warm from the impress of the little curly head, but Little Pearl was gone!

For an instant I stood dumb, breathless; then in frantic foolishness I searched the rooms, the yard, calling upon the child's name as if she could hear and answer me! And then at last a happy thought broke like sunlight upon me. My husband had been home, and stolen away the child to tease me. I set about preparing dinner, looking every moment to see him come in. In a little while the noon bell rang, bringing the laborers from the clearing. I hurried out to meet them.

"Where is Mr. Weston?" I questioned, with my heart in my mouth.

"Haven't seen him, ma'am, since this morning."

"Not seen him? You surely have, he's got my baby."

But the men shook their heads, and catching up my shawl, I hurried off in the direction of his office.

Half a mile from the cottage I met him on his way home.

"Why, Belle," he cried, catching my arm, and looking down in consternation at my dragged garments and muddy feet, "in God's name where are you going? what is the matter?"

"O Philip, the baby, Little Pearl, what have you done with her?"

"Done with Little Pearl? are you going mad, Belle? for God's sake tell me what you mean?"

"She's gone, Little Pearl's gone—I came down stairs and found her cradle empty, and I was so sure you had her."

He stood silent a moment, his face growing as white and stern as death; then he said, solemnly:

"No, Belle, I haven't seen the child. I haven't been home since morning."

He started on before me with long, rapid strides, into the cottage, and up to the little cradle standing in the corner, as if to satisfy his own eyes. Then he turned back to the yard, and began to examine the tracks in the mud around the doorway. The farm-hands were examining them also.

"Moccasin tracks, Boss," said one old man, significantly, pointing to an indenture in the yielding soil. "Injuns, I guess."

My husband's face grew a shade whiter.

"Yes," he responded, "that's it, come, my lads, we haven't a moment to lose."

He started off, followed by the laborers, but a few rods from the house he turned back.

"Poor Belle," he said, putting his arms round me, "this is terrible for you, but you must be strong, and hope for the best. The Indians have passed here, and it was they, no doubt, who stole the child. We must try to intercept them before they cross the river; we may not be back to-night; you had better go over to Mr. Delevan's and stay till we return."

But I did not go. I went into the lonely cottage, and fell on my knees beside the little empty crib. God had given me my wish, I had no baby. Ah me, the self-torture, the bitterness of those long, long night hours can never be described!

Morning dawned at last, lurid and misty, a red sun struggling up through ragged billows of gray fog. About ten o'clock my husband and his party returned, weary, haggard and hopeless. They had followed the Indians all night, but when at last they came up with them, far beyond the river, they could gain no tidings of the child. And all our after efforts were equally unsuccessful. We offered rewards, and instituted every means of inquiry, but in vain. Little Pearl was gone! I had no baby!

There was ample time for leisure then; no peevish cries, no busy little hands, no little baby wants to occupy me! But I, who had hated labor, fled to it now as my sole refuge and comfort. The only ease I found was in constant action. My husband worked too, but his life seemed to have lost its impelling force, its happiest inspiration.

Years went by, and not content with my simple household duties I took charge of a

neighboring school—later I aided my husband in his office. My mind expanded, my ideas enlarged. I was no longer an indolent, helpless reposer, but a strong, self-reliant, labor-loving woman, a true helpmate for my husband. Success crowned our united efforts, wealth and renown flowed in upon us, my husband was elected judge, and spoken of for Congress—but we were childless, for no more babies came.

I cannot say that I regretted this, for I could not bear to think of seeing another baby face in my little lost one's place. I could never forget her. Hundreds and hundreds of times I seemed to hear again the sharp, imperative cry, as I heard it that morning, and I would drop my work, and rush away to the empty cradle, with a foolish fancy that I should see again the little rosy face, with its azure eyes and golden rings of hair. But it was all fancy—the pretty little cradle was empty, and would forever remain so; and I should go down to my grave yearning and longing for the cooing voice, the velvet lips, the baby caresses that would never be mine again. Little Pearl was gone!

Ten years after our removal to the West, we received intelligence of my uncle's death, and being his only heirs, we went down at once to attend to the settlement of his estates. Returning homeward, we made a tour of Niagara and the principal Northern cities.

One September night found us in New York, and at the opera. The house was unusually gay, the music divine, but through all the glamour and perfume of gorgeous toilets, amid the wailing of the music, and the triumph strains of the singers, I sat unconscious, almost indifferent, the old yearning in my heart roused up to strange and sudden intensity. Only one thought possessed me, and that was of my lost baby, Little Pearl. I seemed to be living over that terrible morning and long, long night again, and my soul cried out for my child with a longing that would not be silenced. Yet in the gay house and exquisite music there was nothing suggestive of her short, sweet little life; why then did she seem so near me? what was it thrilled and shook me so?

The opera over we started for our hotel. At one of the crossings the carriage made a sudden halt.

"Nothing but a strap broke loose, all right in a moment, sir," said the driver, in answer to my husband's inquiry.

I leaned out while he was arranging it,

looking over the great silent city, and up into the solemn summer night. The sky was blue and cloudless, the stars mellow and misty, and a full moon hung like a golden jewel in the far west. My eyes filled with tears, and an inexpressible yearning filled my soul.

"Where is my baby, where is Little Pearl to-night?" I murmured.

"Please madam, just one penny!"

The slender, childish voice, mellow and sweet as the note of a blackbird, startled me out of my reverie, and looking down, I saw a tiny figure, and an appealing baby-face, below me in the misty moonlight.

"Please madam, I never begged before, but grandmarm is so sick, and she's eat nothing since yesterday."

Just then the driver sprang to his box, and the carriage whirled off again, leaving the little thing far behind; but I caught at my husband's arm, in breathless eagerness.

"Philip," I entreated, "stop the carriage. I must see that child."

He glanced back hesitatingly, and there the little thing stood in the moonlight, just as we had left her.

"I must, Philip," I repeated, "don't deny me."

And my husband bade the driver turn back, which he did with a muttered imprecation.

"Now, my little girl," I said, leaning out, and extending my hand, "come here, and tell me how I can help you."

"Grandmarm is so sick," she replied, coming close up to the wheels, and raising her soft blue eyes to my face, "and so hungry, and I never begged before, madam!"

"And where does your grandma live, dear?"

"Right down this street, in that row of tenements."

"Take her up, Philip, we must look into this case."

My husband obeyed, and the driver being promised double pay, turned down towards the tenements. I seated the little girl beside me, and took her little brown hand in mine. The bare touch of her slender fingers made the very blood in my heart thrill, and I wanted to clasp her in my arms, and cover her poor, wan little face with kisses, with a longing that was absolute pain.

"How pretty she is," I said, smoothing back the tangled golden hair that shaded her white forehead and sweet blue eyes.

"She looks like a frightened bird," said my

husband, smiling; "what shall you do with her, Belle?"

"Keep her forever, if I can," I replied, with a feeling of intense happiness at my heart.

Just then we reached the tenements.

"That's the grandmarm's room," said the child, pointing upward to a window in which a dim light was burning.

We left the carriage, and followed her up the long flights of stairs, and into the bare, humble room. On a rude couch lay an old woman, her strong, worn face wearing that pallor which never knows no change.

"Grandmarm," cried the child, running to the bedside, "here's a good, nice lady come, and she'll give you some tea, and you'll get well now."

The old woman turned her head, her eager eyes fastening themselves upon us.

"Thank God," she murmured. "I thought I should die, and leave her alone."

"What can we do for you, madam?" I asked, bending over her.

"Nothing for me, I'm past help, it's the child I want looked after."

"Yes, but you must have nourishment—Philip, go out for some tea, and we'll have a fire at once."

"Woman," she said, solemnly, "listen to me. I'm dying—in a few hours I shall be in the other world—I could drink a drop o' wine, but nothing else."

My husband procured it in a few moments, and after drinking it, she seemed somewhat revived.

"Now," she said, "while I'm strong enough, let me speak about the child—when I'm gone she won't have a friend in the world—you look like a rich woman, would you—"

"I'll take her, and be a mother to her," I interrupted, eagerly.

"Come round here and let me see your face."

I obeyed, bending down to the dying eyes that searched my face so keenly. After a moment she drew a deep breath.

"Yes," she said, "I can trust you, your face is good and honest—God has sent you—come here, little Rose—this is your new mother, you must love her, and be a good child when I'm gone."

I held out my arms, and the little thing nestled close to my bosom, looking up into my face with wondering eyes.

"I will be good to her," I said; "as God hears me, I will."

"I believe you, and now I can die in peace. I should a' been dead long ago, but for leavin' the child—that kept me back. She aint a friend in the world, and she's no flesh and blood o' mine. Ten years ago, my old man was alive then, and runnin' a flatboat on a Western river, we fell in with a party o' Injuns. They had a white baby with 'em, the prettiest, daintiest little thing I ever set eyes on. I had jest buried my own baby, and I couldn't bear to see 'em carry the poor little thing away, so I persuaded my old man to buy it. They were willing enough to sell, so I took the child and raised it as my own. I meant to hunt up its folks, but I named it after my own baby, and got sich a likin' for the little creater, I couldn't bear to give her up—but I was sorry enough after my old man died, and we come to want. But I've kept the clothes she had on, and maybe, madam, you may hear of her people some day."

"Let us see the clothes," gasped my husband, his face as white as death.

"Look in the box and get 'em, Rose."

The child obeyed, bringing a small bundle carefully wrapped up. I unfolded it with trembling hands, and then as my eyes fell upon the embroidered frock, the little crimson sack, and the dainty blue shoes, my own baby's clothes, for the first time in my life I dropped down in a dead faint.

When consciousness returned, I found my husband bending over me with a radiant face, and little Rose, my own Little Pearl, closely clasped in his arms.

"Found at last, Belle," he murmured, tremulously. "God be thanked, we are not childless now."

Then sitting down by the bedside we told our story, and the dying woman listened with tears of joy.

"God's work," she said, solemnly, "God Almighty's own work."

And a few hours later, just as the sweet September stars faded, and the golden dawn-tints began to glimmer above the sleeping city, her spirit took its flight in peace. And when the funeral rites were over we journeyed back to our Western home, how happy, how grateful to God I need not try to express. From henceforth our lives were perfect—Little Pearl was found.

LOST AND FOUND.

BY MISS CAMILLA WILLIAN.

ONE day there was a great show of soldiers in Broadway, New York, and everybody ran to see it. Men, women and children crowded forward, pushing, treading on each other, making a muss generally. And when at length the regiment had gone by, some people found that they had lost their company, or lost their way, or lost their purses, or their clothes. Scarcely anybody came out of that crowd as they went into it.

that there were nothing but eyes. But these eyes were so large, and bright, and sorrowful, and frightened, all together, that she could not help noticing them. There was a boy to them.

He was a very pretty boy, white and delicate, with wavy black hair, and he was very prettily dressed in a Turkish costume.

Nina stopped and looked at him, and when she did that he went nearer to her, and tried to speak. But he was so near bursting right out crying that he couldn't say one word.

"Poor little boy!" says Nina, taking his hand in hers, and pushing up the brim of his hat a little, that she might see his face better. "Are you lost, dear? Tell me all about it."

Then the little boy told his story as well as he could. He and Tom had come out to see the soldiers, and Tom had been saucy to a policeman, and the policeman had taken him by the shoulder, and lifted his billet to strike him, and the crowd had pressed between them, and the boy had been pushed, and pushed, till he couldn't find Tom. And that was all, only that he was lost, and didn't know where to go to.

"What is your name, little boy?" Nina asked, wiping his tears away. "And how old are you?"

"My name is Rubber Ball," said the boy. "But I don't know how old I am.

My father's forty years old. I heard him say so. But some days he says he is most a hundred."

"I should think you might be about seven years old," says Nina. "But what a name it is—Rubber Ball! What is your father's name?"

"His name is Bouncing Bill," answered the little boy, sighing.

Nina held up both her hands.

"My sakes!" she said. "I never did hear such names! Where do you live, little Rubber?"

The boy hesitated, as if he didn't know what to say.

"Can't you tell me?" asked Nina.

"We live most everywhere," answered Rubber, in his soft voice.



NINA AND THE LOST CHILD.

A pretty French nursery-girl who had run down from the Fifth Avenue hotel to see the soldiers, lost her bonnet.

Now French nursery-girls do not usually wear bonnets, they wear white caps; but Nina Berger was a nursery-girl without any one to nurse, and could do as she pleased. The little girl who had been under her care was dead; and the parents kept Nina because they were fond of her.

"Well, that is fine, to lose one's bonnet," she said, with a laugh. "But then a veil is better than nothing."

So she threw her veil over her head, and was scampering back to her hotel again, when at a street corner she saw just in front of her a pair of eyes. I don't mean to say that she saw only one pair, and I don't mean to say

"Well, come home with me, and we will find out where your father is," Nina said, not liking very well to give such a beautiful boy up to a policeman, and not liking to stand there in the street any longer. For besides the great crowd, there was a tall man in a sugar-loaf hat and a cloak hanging back from his shoulders, who had been standing close by ever since she stopped, and staring at her or the boy, she did not know which. But since Nina was very pretty, she took for granted that he was staring at her.

So she took the little boy by the hand, and led him away, just glancing back once over her shoulder to see if the tall, black-whiskered man was still there. He was, she saw, and was looking after them with large, steady eyes. But now she perceived that the eyes were fixed on the boy, and not on her.

A thought struck her.

"Is your Tom a handsome, tall, pale gentleman in a cloak, and with a beautiful diamond in his shirt-front?" she asked.

"O no!" said Rubber. "He wears a red shirt, and his face is red, and he isn't tall."

So she led him home to the hotel, and in by a servants' door, and up to the parlor where her mistress was.

"See what I have found, madam," she said, leading the little boy to Mrs. Blake.

The lady was very pale and sober, and she was dressed in deep black for her little girl; but she held out her hand to Rubber, and smiled faintly when she asked his name.

"What lovely hair he has!" she said, when Nina had told his story; "and how oddly he is dressed. And such names, too! I cannot imagine what they mean. What does your father do, dear?"

"He rides horses," said the boy, looking all about the room, which was the most beautiful he had ever seen.

"Has he many horses?" the lady asked. "Is he rich?"

"O yes! He has lots of horses. And there are the black ponies, and the red ponies; and the white ponies."

"He must be rich if he has horses and ponies in New York," the lady said. "Take him to the table and show him the pictures, Nina; and when Mr. Blake comes in, he will see what is to be done for him."

The lady turned her head away, and looked

out into the avenue where a steady stream of carriages was going up; and Nina led the boy to a table not far away, and opening a book, began to show him the pictures.

It happened that she had opened a book full of pictures of animals, elephants, camelopards, and such, and the moment he saw them, the boy exclaimed with delight.

"O, that's Sultan!" he said, pointing to the picture of the elephant. "He takes me up with his trunk, and puts me on his back."

"O, that's an elephant!" said Nina.

"Our elephant's name is Sultan," the boy said. "And we've got a camelopard like that, and we've got lions in cages, and tigers, and—"

"Mercy on us!" cried out Mrs. Blake,



NINA SHOWING THE PICTURE BOOK.

turning round from the window. "That accounts for it. He is a circus boy! Don't keep him here. Take him out somewhere, and send for a policeman to carry him to his people."

"Do your people have a circus, and wild beasts?" asked Nina, as she led her little foundling out of the room.

"Yes," he answered, with tears in his eyes. He was very much hurt at being driven away so, and at the lady's voice, which was almost cross. "But I don't want to go to them. I want to stay with you."

Nina's eyes were full of tears; for she was already fond of the child, and ever since she found him had been thinking how glad she would be if Mr. and Mrs. Blake would adopt him for their own. It cut her to the heart to

have to send him away with a stranger, and never to see him again.

"Don't they use you well, my darling?" she asked, kneeling down by the child in the large hall, and putting her arm around him.

"No," said he, and began to cry. "Sometimes they whip me, and they make me ride the big horse when I am frightened, and they make me dance when I am tired. I want to go to my own home."

"Where is your own home?" Nina asked.

"I don't know. It's where papa is," the child answered.

"What is the matter with your little boy?" asked a voice close to them; and, looking up, Nina saw the same tall man who had stared at them in the street. But she wasn't afraid of him now. She was glad of some one to tell her story to.

As she told it, the man's face, that had been pale, grew very red; and he seemed to be weak all at once, for he sat down on a chair almost as if he fell into it, and drew the child to him, holding him by both hands, and looking at him in the strangest way.

Nina didn't know what to make of it; and when she looked at the boy she saw that he had stopped crying, and was staring steadily at the gentleman.

"Look at me! Look at me!" cried the gentleman, grasping the little hands close. "Do not you know me? Do you know your own name? O, my little one! My dear little Eugene!"

Every word of this was said in French; and when the little boy heard it, his pretty face blushed and brightened up, and he threw himself into the gentleman's arms, with his little arms around the gentleman's neck, and cried out, "O, my dear papa!"

And what the little boy said was also in French.

Well, such a crying and kissing as there was! and all that Nina could do was to stand by and hold up her hands, her heart full of wonder and delight.

"He is my own little boy!" said the gentleman, at length, holding the child tightly in his arms. "He was coming with his mother from France to live with me in Cuba, and the vessel was wrecked, and his mother was drowned. I thought that my child must be lost also, though I heard that a poor sailor tried to save him. But here he is, after three years! I saw him in the street, and I could not take my eyes from him, nor help following him. I knew my child!"

And again the gentleman hugged and kissed the boy, and laughed and cried over him.

Well, to make a long story short, it turned out as the gentleman said. A sailor had saved the child, not knowing his name, had brought him to New York, and left him with some poor people, and had gone away to sea again. The circus man had seen him, and had carried him off, thinking him a prize, he was so pretty and bright.

I don't think there was ever a happier father and son than those two; and when Monsieur Lablanche, for that was the Frenchman's name, asked Nina to be his boy's nurse, then there were three happy ones.

And by-and-by, when the gentleman found that Nina was not only pretty but good, and that she had a little education, he married her, and the three were happier still. And I don't see but the bride appears as nice as if she had been brought up rich.

But Mrs. Blake is sorry that she hadn't made more of the little foundling, for his father is a rich man; and now she can't make Eugene like her for her life.

LOVE ABOLISHES DEATH.

A STORY OF TRIAL, SUFFERING AND TRIUMPH.

BY WILLIAM H. BUSHNELL.

"If I should ever love a man it would be with all my heart, all my strength, and for life," said Maud Elliston; and well she became her name, for a more princely beauty it would have been very difficult to find.

"But the man would have to be worthy of you, Maud," replied her cousin; "otherwise you could never love him thus, and such a one is rarely found."

"Alas! yes. Still, I have passed the foolish days of girlhood when I would have exalted a man into an angel, and been blinded to all his faults. Somebody—I have forgotten who—says 'love goes where it is sent,' and again, that 'it is not to be reasoned down;' so I perceive I shall be like the rest of my sex, and bow to my fate."

"I trust it may be a kind one, for an unworthy love would crush you to the earth."

"I do not know that. Women, especially, can suffer more than is generally believed to be the case. Heaven, and wisely, has so ordained it."

"You think, as of the famous receipt for cooking a hare, you must first catch your lover."

"Yes, and yet I do not think such conversations in the least out of place. Forewarned is to be forearmed, and it is well to be prepared for what is to come."

"You believe that marriage is the true sphere of woman?"

"Without a doubt. I have never known one happy without it, though there may possibly have been isolated cases. Though there is nothing in the least disgraceful in old-maidism, yet it can have but few charms. Living alone was not the predestined state of man and woman."

"And you most certainly were not 'predestined' to it," replied her cousin, with a laugh. "You have everything on your side—youth, beauty, wealth, accomplishments—while poor I have but little to boast of either."

"And yet your life may be infinitely the most happy, may be tranquil as a summer stream, singing sweetly as it goes, while mine may be turbulent as one swollen by spring-time rains, dashing and beating itself to foam

against the rocks. Ah me! if we could only see what the end will be of all this state of unrest!"

"You are wrong, Maud. In this case, as in the great majority, I firmly believe that 'ignorance is bliss' to mortals."

"Years will determine. We can safely leave it to that tribunal."

"And according to your belief to—love."

"Yes," with a little sigh.

Maud Elliston was all that her cousin had said of her. She had everything in her favor for the making of what is known as a "good match," and yet had passed her twenty-first year and was heart-whole. If love had ever sown any seeds they had as yet never blossomed—lay dormant—and were waiting for some more potent power than had ever swayed her soul to bring them to maturity. Perhaps her peculiar notions of the "eternal fitness" of things had something to do with this. She was called peculiar, with the slightest possible tinge of strong-mindedness, was free in the expression of her opinions, and more than likely had erected an ideal image towards which she would be the first to turn iconoclast.

But the world was forced to acknowledge her right to be independent. A rich orphan from early childhood, she had the means to do as she pleased, was not indebted to any one for the cost of education or living, and an old unmarried uncle, whose ward she was, had petted and spoiled her to the greatest extent.

In this, had she not been gifted with an unusually well-balanced mind, he would have perfectly succeeded, backed as he was by all her associates. Her beauty no one was foolish enough to deny. Her figure was as near perfection, both as regarded height and development, as was possible; her features blended rarely one with another, the straight nose matching the small mouth and delicately curved chin, the broad, not over-high brow fading imperceptibly into the oval of the cheeks, the brows clearly pencilled, and the long lashes shading at will the eyes whose melting hazel was at times as sparkling as mid-forest lakes when their untrou-

bled depths have caught and imprisoned the stars. Her hair was long, soft, waving, shining as satin, and of the deepest nut-brown; her hands long and slender, and her foot petite and high-arched. Study had refined and elevated her mind, and a more accomplished musician or sweeter-voiced girl could not have been found out of the circle of the great artists.

It was strange, consequently, that she had never had a lover, that is, an accepted one. Many, it is true, had bowed at the shrine of her beauty, and not a few to her wealth, but they were not made of such stuff as she would have in her husband, and she coolly repelled their advances—chilled at the outset the little love they fancied they possessed.

"Maud Elliston will go through the woods and take up with a crooked stick at last," grumbled the gossips; but she turned a deaf ear to their croakings.

"Maud will stay and take care of her uncle," said the fond old man, as he smoothed her silken hair, and petted her still more, as he grew toward his dotage.

And it appeared as if the latter prophecy would prove true, for still another year passed and there was no fluttering of pulse or heart, no sighs, no trembling when some particular masculine step drew near or masculine voice was heard. Yet it requires but little to turn the current of a maiden's thoughts from their accustomed channel, little for the pliant heart of girlhood to become interested, and before she was aware of it, Maud found such to be the case; not that, as yet, there was anything of love, only interest, or that still more dangerous feeling, friendship.

It happened thus that her pulses were first quickened, and thoughts of another began to take the place of self.

A poor half-crazed old man was wandering through the village where she resided, and was made the butt of men as well as half-grown boys. From her window she could see and hear all that transpired, and her blood boiled with indignation when the frolic that had commenced in mirth was carried on in cruelty; when the poor cripple was thrown to the ground in order to see him struggle to his feet again. In another instant she would have forgotten all of sex and the false etiquette of society, and rushed to the rescue, when a gentleman—he had the stamp of nature's nobility upon his face—crossed the street and interfered.

"You are not men, but base miserable cowards," he said, calmly, though the words came hissing hot from between his compressed lips and white teeth, "or you never would seek to injure and give pain to one who has already full enough to bear."

"Who be ye that comes to lecture us?" asked a burly ruffian, drawing near and rolling up his shirt-sleeves in an ominous manner.

"I am a man!"

"We'll soon see that. Come on, boys."

In an instant the ruffian lay sprawling in the gutter. One well-directed blow had been sufficient to accomplish this and more. It completely cowed the craven-hearted ruffian, and drew the ridicule of his companions upon him. But the stranger took no part in it. He lifted the poor man to his feet, placed some money in his hand, and led him as gently off as if he had been his own father.

There was no one to applaud the generous noble deed; but it was not needed. Sufficient, more than sufficient, would have been his reward could he have seen Maud Elliston as she clapped her little hands until they tingled, and heard her oft-repeated "Bravo!"—heard her as she described the scene to her cousin with words of glowing praise and honor.

But she was not content with this alone. Her woman's curiosity, if nothing else, made her inquire who it was that had thus bravely struck a blow for misery. And all the information she desired was not difficult to obtain. Indeed, it came without the seeking, for her old uncle had heard the story from the battered lips of the crestfallen bully, and threatened to give him a caning if he even dreamed of revenge. Consequently, he came home filled with it, and as they enjoyed their quiet chat after tea, Maud listened with swelling bosom to the praises of her hero.

"I tell you, Maud," said the excited old man, "he's such stuff as there used to be in my day. None of your Miss Nancy fellows, but smart as lightning, true as steel, and with a heart too big for his body."

"Then you have seen him, uncle?"

"Yes, and found out all I could about him, and more than that, asked him here to dinner to-morrow."

"I presume he has a name," interposed the girl, as demurely as if she had no special interest in the matter.

"Of course he has, and a good one, too. I used to know some of the same name in my younger days, and they were good stock, the whole of them, and I shouldn't wonder if he belonged to one of the same families."

"Very likely; but perhaps I could judge more correctly if I knew what he was called."

"To be sure—to be sure, Kent Van Courtland. What do you say to that, miss?"

"A very good name, and not a common one. What is his business?"

"A surveyor—civil engineer, I believe they call them now-a-days, as they have new-fangled notions for everything."

"What could have called him into this part of the country? Certainly a railroad cannot be talked about over our mountains!"

"Unlikelier things have happened, I can tell you," replied the old man, bringing down his cane with a thump that caused his niece to start. "But I believe he came here for no such purpose. Simply to rusticate. Is that not the fashionable term, miss?"

"Then he is simply a bird of passage?"

"He is a noble fellow, anyhow, and whether you like it or not, I have invited him here to dine."

"I have no right to object, uncle."

"Of course not; though there is no telling what a woman will do. So see to it that we have a good dinner, something solid, and then as many French airs and jimeracks as you please."

It would have been contrary to all preconceived ideas of womanhood if Maud had not dressed herself with exceeding care upon the following day, and entered the parlor radiant with beauty—and all the necessities added. She was introduced, and received her visitor with the rare grace that good society can alone give, and very soon the conversation flowed easily, and she was free with her compliments of his kind-heartedness and bravery.

"It was very little—nothing more than any true man would have done," he replied; and then instantly changed the subject.

"Modest as well as brave, a rare thing in a man," was the mental comment of the girl as she listened to his conversation with her uncle for a weary hour; for it was all about the Van Courtlands the old man had known in his younger days.

But she was repaid when the late dinner had been despatched, and, seated at the piano, he mingled his rich deep bass voice with hers, proving himself an accomplished

musician, as he was. And later still, when the house was hushed, and she sat in the privacy of her own chamber, she could not deny that she had found her ideal, so far as the physical was concerned, for Kent Van Courtland was tall, strong, brave, with eyes black and sparkling, hair and mustache of the same hue, a sweet smile and a sweet voice. Yes, she had found her ideal, and the love that had so long been denied entrance was creeping into her soul, filling the void, and was glorifying her entire being.

With such an introduction, and especially as he was urged so to do, the visits of Van Courtland grew to be frequent, and his stay was protracted far beyond what he had at first anticipated. Like Maud, his passions were strong, and the depths of his heart had never before been stirred. But he was proud as well—knew that while she was blessed with wealth, his fortune was entirely in prospective—and though riches would never influence him in the least in the choice of a wife, yet the world would look upon it in that light. So he shrank from making known his feelings, and yet, mothlike, fluttered still around the candle, only to scorch his wings beyond cure. But the game was a dangerous one they were playing, and if not successful, must result fatally to both, for there never could be a medium to souls like theirs.

Summer was fading slowly and beautifully into autumn, and the hills were clothed in russet, gold and vermillion. Van Courtland had been often called away by business, but ever returned, and Maud counted the days of his absence, and always looked anxiously for his coming. She did not deny the true state of her feelings to her cousin (who was her confidant in all things), and many a long talk they had upon the subject. But Maud was slowly giving up many of her quixotic ideas, and all her former theory of the real was lapsing into the ideal—even romantic.

Both the profession and taste of Van Courtland, as well as the natural craving of man for gun and fishing-rod, led him to make frequent explorations in the neighboring hills, and Maud entered enthusiastically into his descriptions, and longed to join him in his researches.

"Such a thing would be impossible," he replied, "very much as it would please me. But there are some of the wonders of nature, and some beautiful scenery, to which you are a stranger, that I would gladly show

you, confident that you would enjoy it as much as I have done."

"And I will go. Uncle, will you make one of the party?"

"Catch me tugging, and puffing, and blowing up the hills," answered the old man, with a merry laugh, as he looked at his somewhat obese figure, "just for the sake of looking at rocks! No, no, miss! you will have to excuse me. I have long been out of training, and would as soon think of entering the prize ring, or a foot race. But that is no reason why you should not enjoy yourself. Mr. Van Courtland will take good care of you, I have no doubt."

"With my life," was the low-voiced answer, that only reached, as it was intended to do, the ears of Maud, who could not keep back the telltale blushes.

"Well," continued the old man, intent upon his own thoughts, "you can ride the pony, Maud, as far as it is possible, make up a party, have John take the lumber wagon with any quantity of luncheon, and so have a lively time. I wish I was able to accompany you, but the gout, miss, the gout, added to the weight of over sixty years, forbids."

"There is one spot in particular," continued Van Courtland, "that I wish to show you. I have found a hitherto undiscovered cave, as I believe, and from it the view is grand and sublime. We can reach it by a little rough walking, and you will be amply repaid for the exertion."

"I have no doubt of it," replied Maud, "and with your permission will get up a little party and make the necessary preparations. When shall we go?"

"To-morrow, if agreeable. The next day I must start for the city."

"So soon!"

The words might have applied to either the proposed visit or his leaving, but, lover-like, he applied them to the latter, and looked his thanks in a manner she could not fail to understand.

The morrow broke brightly, and half a dozen merry couples started upon the proposed picnic, amply provided with all creature comforts—in fact, everything that the careful old uncle deemed essential. Being well-mounted, they rode swiftly forward, followed by the lumbering and heavily-laden wagon, and when the road terminated, they formed a quasi-gipsy encampment, and with sharpened appetites made the very reverse of a fashionable meal.

That done, Van Courtland pointed out various places of interest, and called their attention to scenes that the most gifted artist would fall to reproduce upon canvas, for though nature has many a copyist, she has never a rival.

"Now then, ladies," he said, "I will lead the way to the cave of which I have heretofore spoken. Let me warn you, however, that you must have sharp eyes; nay, I need not have said that—sure feet and stout hearts. You must also be willing to soil your dresses, and endure a wetting. The entrance to the cave is behind a waterfall."

This was enough for the majority, and the project was about to be given up, when Maud interposed with:

"I shall certainly go if you will accompany me, Mr. Van Courtland."

"I shall only be too happy to be your guide, and, if need be, your protector. But," and he paused and looked anxiously about, "there is every prospect of a thunderstorm. Had we not better postpone our visit?"

"No time like the present. And, as you say we shall have to pass behind a fall, a trifle more of wetting can do no harm."

He took from the wagon a waterproof, and after vainly endeavoring to persuade some of the others to accompany them, he gave Maud his hand, and they began their downward journey. The path was winding and steep, and the footing uncertain, and soon it became necessary for the hand to be changed for an arm, which more than once had to encircle the waist to keep her from falling.

But at length the bottom was reached, and they stood before the foam-flecked sheet of water that leaped from the rocks twenty feet above. The fall—the view from that point, with the grand old mountains rising overhead and the river and green valleys stretching away in front, would indeed have well repaid Maud for the toil in reaching it, had not the storm swiftly gathered and now broken in fury about them. Something as it must have been in the time of the flood, the flood-gates of heaven were opened, the earth rocked with the thunder, and the lightning's glare almost blinded them. To seek other shelter was impossible. The cave was their only resource, and Van Courtland led the awed but brave girl behind the swollen fall and assisted her to climb to the hollow in the rocks.

"Here, at least, we are safe," he whispered,

as he drew her to the most remote corner, and arranged a seat.

"And it would have paid for a hundred fold the fatigue. Look at the lightning as it gleams, flashes and shimmers through the prismatic waters. Never has mortal conceived of aught like this. It is the fairyland of childhood!"

It was in reality startlingly beautiful, and as the sky darkened and the lightning played more fitfully, their lips were hushed and their souls bowed to the majesty of the God of storms. But soon fear began to creep in upon them. The edge of the rock was evidently crumbling. Particles were constantly falling, and what if a great mass should give way, block up the entrance, and entomb them forever?

But it could not be. The rocks had stood since the throes of creation, and certainly no single storm could hurl them down. At least Van Courtland thought so, but even as he was whispering words of consolation there came a fearful flash of lightning, a terrific burst of thunder, a sudden upheaving of the ground, a mighty crash, and all was darkness!

"Great Heaven!" exclaimed Maud, clinging to her companion for support. "the rocks have fallen in front, and we are buried alive!"

"It may not be as you think," but he shuddered as he spoke. "Wait. I will make an examination."

He drew forth the little case of matches he always carried, struck one after another, and by their feeble light was enabled to ascertain the true state of the case, to find that her sad words were true, that they were indeed shut out from all the world, that hundreds of tons of earth and rock must have fallen, loosened by the continual dripping of the water, and the sudden freshet, perchance by a bolt of lightning, and that there could be scarcely a possibility of escape, of being rescued while yet alive!

"Miss Elliston, no, with the shadows of eternity upon us I will not mock my feelings by calling you so, Maud, dear Maud, I must tell the truth."

"It is better to do so at all times," she replied, in a hoarse and unnatural voice.

"Your worst fears are realized. We are indeed lost. And here, with the treacherous sands of time sliding from beneath our feet, I must confess my love."

"You need not say more," she answered, bending towards him and placing her hand

in his. "Love shall glorify the brief residue—if it is to be so—of our life, and hand-in-hand we will pass through the golden gate."

For a time their new-born—not newly-born, but just confessed—affection triumphed over all other things. In sweet sad communion, locked fast within each other's arms, with heart beating against heart, and lip answering kiss for kiss, they forgot that their only bridal would be that of death. Yet they could not but awaken to a realizing sense of their condition, and each, suffering more for the other's sake than his or her own, sought means of escape.

Vain! Vain! Never were mortals more completely entrapped, and every effort proved abortive, and they returned again and again, to find sad consolation in the almost matchless love that pervaded their entire being.

And slowly—how slowly, the hours crept on. The last match had been consumed, their watches had stopped, they had slumbered fitfully in each other's arms, all of time was lost for them, and the horrible, slow, torturing death of starvation was slowly but creeping upon them. In the strongest meaning of the term, they were dying by inches, the spirit was being freed from the confining clay, particle by particle.

All of hope had long since died out, the close air was terrible to their lungs, the chill damps freezing the very marrow in their bones, yet, brave-hearted, they murmured not, made no complaints, were even happy in their mutual adoration. It was a love now (no matter what it might have been under other circumstances) unsullied by a taint of earth, almost as much so as that of the angels, the nearest possible approach to that they would enjoy when life had faded out as a dream—ended like a song that was sung. But though the spirit grew strong in suffering, the flesh became weaker, and the end was very near.

"Kent," murmured the poor devoted girl, as she endeavored to nestle still more closely to his heart, "I am dying. Kiss me, darling, and promise not to remain long after I have gone. I would not go even to heaven without you."

"This is horrible. But, Maud, try to live yet for my sake."

"It cannot be! I have battled to the last extremity—can do so no longer. My strength has given way, my heart has ceased its beating. Kiss me yet once more—how very dark and cold it is! We will be united forever in

heaven. Hush! do not weep. Love—is—the—peer—of—death!"

He felt her sink back in his arms and her form become limp and motionless. Then his own senses reeled, and the angels that looked down into that dark prison-house saw the dying straining to his heart the dead.

For a long time, however, the earth that had fallen had been slowly crumbling away, without their knowledge, and when the black-winged messenger of death was summoning them, the entire mass gave way with a crash and the blessed sunlight and pure air entered unchecked.

In an instant Van Courtland was himself

again. He lifted the beautiful form in his arms and staggered from beneath the sheet of water with a great joy swelling in his heart; reached the firm ground, but only to fall into the arms of the old uncle of Maud, who, with his friends, had been unceasing in the toil of rescue.

From the very jaws of death they had been snatched, and were brought back again to life, and beauty, and love; a love that lasted until many children had arisen to call them blessed, lasted for many a long happy year before they in reality took their places in "the low green tent that never outward swings."

LOVE CONQUERS.

BY ADA L. FLETCHER.

SHE had stolen away from the rest of the crowd, and was standing beneath the shade of a giant oak tree, looking with dreamy eyes up into the wilderness of leaves which the frost king was touching with his transforming fingers, turning the delicate modest green into crimson, and scarlet, and gold. Her face had nothing remarkable about it except the eyes, which were a rather startling contrast to the other commonplace irregular features—so large, so dark, so wonderfully, *spiritually* bright were they. People who looked casually at her face when it was in repose, or the eyes downcast, pronounced Eugenie Holmes a "very homely girl indeed," and wondered "what there was about her people found so attractive." But if they lingered near her until the lashes were lifted, and the face lighted by interest or enthusiasm, or listened to the clear sweet voice in conversation or argument, they marvelled no longer why there was always a crowd about her, while other girls, with faultless faces, and manners, and dress, were either left to themselves or joined the number of her admirers. She did not know the secret of her power herself, and often wondered at it when looking at her own plain face, and thinking of others who possessed the beauty her artist soul worshipped and her woman's heart coveted.

It was late in the season, this rural picnic, planned by Eugenie, who never did anything like any one else, and who waited till October for her excursion to the woods, when the beautiful Indian summer was bathing them with glory. Though pleasantly warm in the sunlight, here in the shadow where she was standing the air was chilly, and the little scarlet shawl wrapped about her shoulders just then was very gratefully received.

"You are very kind," she said, turning to the intruder on her solitude, "to think of me when I was not thinking of myself."

"When would you ever think of yourself, Genie?" he said, with a tender cadence in his voice, that brought a swift rush of color to the girl's pale cheek that told her story plainly enough. "We have

all got into the habit of thinking for you," he went on, lightly. "But I must disclaim the merit of thinking of the shawl. I was standing out there with the rest, admiring the picture you made here in this fairy bower, in your cool white robes, when little Eda came running to me with orders from mother, 'to go and tell Eugenie to put this shawl on, right straight;' and so, like a dutiful son, I came. Had you better not come out in the sunlight?"

The light in his eyes was as tender as his voice, as he stood looking down at her from the height of his six feet of noble young manhood; the whole face showing his longing then and there to take the slight figure in his arms to his heart, and tell her of the wealth of love that was hers. And he would have done it, only there were two sides to Earl Courtney's nature. Instead, he only drew the little hand within his arm, and the two went out together toward one of the many groups scattered about the place. A clamor of voices reached them as they drew nearer.

"There's Eugenie!" cried one voice louder than the rest; and a beautiful girl, Earl Courtney's sister, and Eugenie's dearest friend, sprang toward them. "I'll ask her," she said.

"What is the subject of discussion, Pet?" And Earl threw his arm carelessly about his sister, and drew her to him, facing the crowd, causing Jack Harold to cry out, "Come now, old fellow! that's not fair;" and bringing a blush to the already flushed face of the girl.

"Why, I'll tell you," she said. "There's Jack Harold getting up an argument on the subject of long engagements! He says, for instance, that no matter how devotedly a young man may love a girl, if he is poor, and has to win a home before he can take a wife, he has no right to ask her to wait for him; to 'spoil her chance for a better match,' he says, by binding her to him, even if he knows she loves him." And Pet Courtney's blue eyes flashed disdainfully at "that hateful Jack" as she finished.

"And what do you say?" queried Earl, looking fondly down at the bright face raised to his.

"I said that I thought it was a duty every man owed the woman he loved, whether he thought she loved him or not, to tell her so, and give her the choice, at least, of clinging to him or 'waiting for a better match.' Now what do you think?"

Earl's voice grew serious as he answered:

"I know you are sneering at Jack's practical ideas of love and marriage, Pet, but, dear child, such things have to be looked at practically! I hold with Jack that no man has a right to mar any woman's life, to dim the brightness of her youth, by asking her to wait for him an indefinite time, thus wasting the best years of her life; and it is his duty to leave her free to make the more 'fortunate match,' if she finds it. And I hold that, even if he loves her, and knows she loves him, as a true man, he will stifle that love, if he cannot, by reason of poverty, make her his wife, and never let her know it. He must not look at his own happiness, but hers. Even if she loves him, if she does not know of his love, she will try to conquer hers, and so will not slight a better offer. Now, Eugenie!"

"Yes, now Eugenie!" cried Pet, turning swiftly toward her. "Tell us what you think. In all their talk these gentlemen seem to have forgotten that there may be such a thing as a true woman's heart; one that is not always thinking of the worldly advantages of a good match, but would rather spend a lifetime waiting for the man she loved, than marry to-morrow the Prince of Wales, if she didn't love him."

"Romance! romance!" sneered Jack. But Earl was looking at Eugenie, who had slipped her hand out of his arm, and, with her great eyes wide open in their wonderful beauty, and full of intense feeling that transformed her face, was standing erect at his side. She did not speak for some moments, and there was perfect silence in the crowd as they waited. Then she said, in her slow sweet way:

"I do not agree with any of you entirely. No, not even with you, Pet, though you have the best side of the argument, darling. I agree with Mr. Harold so far that I do not believe in long engagements. I think if a man loves a woman—a woman, *not* a child—as a man should love before he

thinks of marriage, and he thinks she loves him, it is his bounden duty to go to that woman with his heart in his hand; not to ask her to wait for him, but to ask her, if she loves him, *to be his wife then*—to be his helpmeet in the struggle with the world. And if the woman is the true woman Pet describes (there are such in the world, gentlemen, though it is fashionable to doubt it), she will ask nothing better than to share his life—even hardships, if hardships there must be! In my creed, he or she who crucifies love for the sake of worldly motives is not worthy of love. As for true love being concealed, as Mr. Courtney says, I do not and never can believe that possible."

There was the faintest note of contempt in her voice in the latter sentence that did not escape Earl's quick ears; but as he was about to answer Mrs. Courtney broke up the group with a single sentence, "Get ready every one of you for home. The sun is almost down. Pet, Genie, I want you to help me gather up the children."

In the bustle of departure he did not find a chance to speak to her again, but he did not forget a word she had said, and meant to have it "out with her," as he expressed it that night. When everybody else was ready he found her with his little sister Eda, looking for a pair of mislaid gloves. Stopping to help her, he said, in his cool willful way:

"Run on and get your seat in the carriage, Eda. Mother is calling you, and Genie, you know, rides home with me."

"You are taking a good deal for granted," she said, with the shy sweet smile that was for no one but Earl.

"It's a way I have," he answered. "Come on now, and let the gloves go. It is getting late, and mother will never cease scolding me if you are the least bit hoarse to-morrow."

In a few moments they were whirling away over the smooth river road, and not until they were out of sight of all the rest did Earl let the reins fall loose on "Prince Charlie's" handsome neck.

"That was an interesting discussion we were having to-day, Genie," he said. "But you were all wrong, my dear friend! all wrong. Your way would do very well for a romance in a novel, but never for real life."

"And yours," she said, "for the cold scheming match-makers and heart-break-

ers of France, but never for real living human hearts. I tell you, Earl, a true genuine love will assert itself in spite of all caution and will. He never really loves who can conceal that love."

"Spoken like an oracle," he said, with a little laugh, but even then thrilling with triumph at the love for him he could not help but read in the depths of the clear eyes and in the tremulous mouth. "But still all wrong. Let us suppose a case now, Eugenie. Suppose I were to love a woman now with all my heart and soul, and had an idea that she loved me. Yet here I am, nearly twenty-five years old, with nothing on earth but poverty to promise any woman who would link her fate to mine for years to come. The woman I love (merely suppositions, of course) is young, charming, and bound, in the nature of things, to have more than one brilliant offer of luxury and ease. Would you not call me the most selfish of men either to marry her now and burden her with poverty and care, or chain her with promises and bind her with vows, thus debarring her from better things?"

"I would call you the most cruel of men," she answered, "if you thought she loved you and did not tell her of your love, but left her to starve and die, as she surely would if she really loved you."

He would not look at her now—he dared not, but went on:

"And as for concealing love, Eugenie, I know it can be done from experience."

"Then you never loved," she cried, passionately. "You can never convince me of that."

He turned quickly, and their eyes met. "Eugenie!" he cried. Then, with an effort of the iron will which was his boast, he turned away again; and until they had nearly reached home not another word was spoken. But each of those two proud souls knew that it was beloved by the other then as truly as if the words had been spoken. And while he was longing to take her in his arms and kiss the red trembling lips, as he called her his promised wife, prudence said, "No; you can best prove that you love her by leaving her free!"

And while she was longing to lay her head on his shoulder and whisper, "Give up the struggle, Earl; darling, I love you well enough to share your poverty," pride said to her, "Never! He does not love you, or he would tell you so."

He had driven home by such a winding way it was twilight when they reached the house, which was home to both. As they drove through the gate, he said:

"You knew I was to start for California next week, Genie?"

"Yes, I had heard it," she said, carelessly. "Do you think you shall like it?"

He gave her no answer to this, and they did not see each other again that night. But when the hazy moonlight of the glorious Indian summer was throwing its weird gleams over all, Earl Courtney was walking his room with feverish steps, the burden of his thoughts, "O Heaven! how can I give her up?" And in another chamber not far distant a little figure, prone upon the floor by the open window, lifted a wild despairing face to the un pitying sky, while the pale lips murmured, "O Heaven! I give him up."

Earl Courtney and Eugenie Holmes had been as brother and sister from childhood. He remembered as well as if it had been yesterday when the little shrinking child of four years, with the starry eyes and wistful mouth, was brought home by his father; and he, a sturdy boy of eight, was given especial charge of her by his mother, who told him the brief sad story of her life. Of how her father, for whom he had been named, an artist by nature and by choice, had gone to Italy six years before, had wooed and won a beautiful Italian girl, Eugenie's mother, and then had died and left them. And now the mother was dead, and by her father's will Eugenie was given to them. He remembered, too, how the little girl clung to him and followed him about, and when the other boys twitted him about being "tied to a girl's apron string" his hot temper blazed forth, and they were glad to let him alone. Then, by the provisions of her father's strange will, she was taken from them and placed in the rigid New England boarding-school, that was just the discipline her impetuous over-enthusiastic nature needed; and they had not seen each other for five years until this summer. And his heart had acknowledged the strange power the girl wielded upon every one who came within her sphere, and he loved her.

Eugenie remembered all this, too, and her experience had been the same, with the exception that her heart had never

ceased to love the noble chivalrous youth who had been her childish protector and defender; but the feeling was deepened and intensified when she saw him in his perfected manhood, the loving dutiful son, the tender watchful brother, and her own kind affectionate friend. She was a woman having loved once to love forever, and she knew it.

The week that followed the autumn picnic was all too swift in its passing for the mother and sisters of Earl Courtney, who bewailed his going bitterly.

"I had thought he would stay here," said his mother to Eugenie, as she bent above her boy's trunk only the day before he was to leave, her tears falling fast as she spoke. "Here in his native town, and take his father's place and practice. What is taking him away, Eugenie?" looking up suddenly into the girl's pale face.

Eugenie knew what the mother's suspicions were, but the clear eyes met hers unflinchingly as she answered, carelessly:

"He thinks he can make more money, perhaps."

"Yes," he answered for himself, coming in through the open bay window. "There is always law trouble in California, and always gold to pay for it. And I can't rest, mother dear, while that mortgage weighs us down."

As he bent to his mother's side and put his arm around her, Eugenie escaped from the room. She knew that both Mrs. Courtney and Pet thought Earl had offered her his heart and been refused, and she could not undeceive them. "Whereas," she thought, bitterly, "it was just the other way." And she went into the dim cool parlor to "play her trouble off at her finger ends," as Pet would have said.

While sitting there in the rapidly gathering darkness, her fingers wandering over the keys in an aimless way that still produced the sweetest music, she heard no step on the soft carpet, and had no thought but that she was alone, until suddenly she felt herself drawn into a close embrace, while kiss after kiss was pressed upon lips, cheek and brow.

"Eugenie, my darling," whispered a voice that made her blood bound in her veins, "Eugenie, my darling, it is hard, but it is best! Good-by, and may God forever bless the only woman I shall ever love!" And Earl was gone, leaving her to sink upon the floor in an ecstasy of mingled sorrow and

bliss. This was their parting, for she could not bear to see him after that, and he went away in the early morning, his heart aching, yet proud in its certainty of right.

Five years with all their changes have passed before we see Eugenie again. After Earl's departure she felt as though she would die if she remained longer inactive, and therefore accepted the situation offered her as one of the many assistant teachers in the seminary of which she was a graduate. And there to-night we find her in her lonely little room, with her aching head supported on her hand, as her weary eyes run over the batch of humdrum schoolgirl "compositions" before her, which must be all "corrected" before she sleeps. Her life has been a very monotonous one during these years, and though many a hand filled with jewels and gold has been extended to help her out of the slough of poverty and labor, the steadfast heart has never faltered in its allegiance to the man who weakly left her to struggle alone, when just the simple expression and assurance of his love would have made the years seem but golden moments. And she has not been idle. Besides her success as a teacher, her name already ranks high as an authoress, and what is better still, her bank account increases, and it will not be long until Eugenie Holmes is a rich woman by her own efforts. She is undeniably proud of this, and shall we wonder?

She heard from Earl once in a long while through Pet's letters, and the news was always encouraging. He has had both health and good luck. The mortgage has been lifted long ago, and in a few years more he hopes to come home "rich enough to make us all happy," Pet says he says. "It takes more than money for that," thought Eugenie, as she glanced at this letter on the night we find her again. Her lip curls involuntarily, and one can see how much colder and prouder her face has grown with time. That was a hard blow that came upon her young heart that October evening long ago, and she has let it harden instead of soften her life. She was so full of love and faith in those days, and her strong earnest nature has gone from one extreme to another. She believes in nothing now, and every line of her writing shows the cloud of cynicism and skepticism that rests upon mind and heart. It is only a cloud, though

she tries hard to make it reality, and even tries to convince herself that she no longer loves Earl Courtney, when the very sight of his name to-night in this letter of Pet's made her heart bound. This is what Pet says: "I want you to come home, Eugenie, if you ever loved any of us, and especially if you ever loved me. For you must know that in 'the leafy month of June' I have consented to make Jack Harold either the happiest or most miserable of men! He says he can't tell which himself! Do you remember our argument on the subject of long engagements that day in the woods? Jack says he loved me then, and took that way to let me know why he didn't ask me to marry him or wait for him. He says he is hardly able to marry now, but he sees I am determined to wait for him anyway, and he takes pity on me! Do come, Eugenie. Earl will be at home then for the first time in five long years, and I know home will not seem like home to him without you."

Eugenie determined to go; not because she would see Earl, but because Pet was dearer to her than was any other living thing (she felt about Earl exactly as if he were dead), and she wants to gratify her; and this with a natural desire to see once again the home of her childhood, makes her write to Pet before she sleeps that she will come.

When Eugenie reached the station she had not seen in so long, it was just at the dawn of a glorious morning in June; and as she was one day ahead of the appointed time, there was no one there to meet her. However, it was only a mile to the Courtney place, and she had walked it often; so she left her luggage in the little waiting-room and went on, feeling lighter of heart than she had felt since she left it. As she drew near the house the sun was just touching the windows, and there were very few signs of life about the house. The servants, however, were up, and had opened the doors, and she went in unseen. Only the parlor door was open inside, and as she stepped within it she started with surprise; for on the large old-fashioned sofa Earl was lying, his head pillowed on his travelling-shawl, his valise by his side, and his whole appearance showing that he had not long arrived, and weary and worn with his journey, had gone to sleep there without awakening the family. Holding her breath almost, that he might not hear and waken, she

came closer to the sofa and looked down into the face of the sleeper. How different this meeting from what she had imagined! She had determined to be so cool and distant from the very first that he would know she had ceased to love him; but now he was asleep, and would never know, so she did not care if her eyes were wet with tears, and the color coming and going in her cheek. And as she bent above him, the love that had become a part of her being overwhelmed her, and bending still lower, she kissed the broad white forehead. Just at that moment Earl awakened, but he could not tell whether the kiss that roused him were a dream or a blessed reality; for all he saw was a little figure at the piano, whose sweet voice soon filled the room with melody in that sweet old ballad "Home Again." His voice joined hers, and ere the song was finished one after another of the family had joined them, until the reunion was complete. And a joyful noisy reunion it was. Earl had come on the train that reached the station an hour before Eugenie's, and coming to the house, had opened the window and found rest on the sofa. That was the explanation. In the surprise and happiness of the moment Eugenie could not put her "cold distant" policy into action; but it was not long before Earl saw and noted the change in her manner, and it made his heart sink within him. For if possible, this long silent trial had only made the young man's love deeper and more tender, and he felt that now he could take her to his heart confident that he could make her lifepath easy. But the days went by, and they drew no closer together, and Earl began to believe that the heart he coveted had been given to some one else. He determined at least that he would know; and one evening, finding her alone in the parlor, sitting by the open window, with the far-away look in her beautiful eyes he remembered so well, he knelt at her side and told her again the "old old story," his voice trembling with intensity of feeling. Told her how he had loved her and longed for her five years before, but for her sake had sacrificed his own selfish pleasure, and left her free. She heard him through, her only sign of emotion the little trembling hand that played with the heavy tassel of the damask curtain, longing again to lay her tired head on his shoulder and tell him, "I loved you then even as I love

you now, and shall love you always," but her evil demon pride sealed the words on her lips; and so when he had finished, she rose and stood looking down, with not an infinite love, but an infinite scorn in her eyes. The voice that spoke was harsh and discordant.

"Earl Courtney," she said, "five years ago you had my heart at your feet, and you knew it. But for the sake of worldly caution and prudence you trampled it beneath them and left it to bleed and die, and went away, calling yourself a hero and a martyr, because you would not prevent my marrying a richer man, when you knew that I could never love again. You left me to struggle alone through the five years that ought to have been the happiest of my life, until I have no love or trust left in me. I have no heart to give you now!" And she swept from the room, leaving him crushed and dazed—with something perhaps of the feeling that was in her heart on that night so long ago. But he saw his conduct in a light he had never seen it in before, and he knew she was right. Saw how much happier they might have been together through the struggle, and how much easier love and sympathy would have made it for both. He could have cursed himself for his own cold calculating folly.

It was the night of the wedding, and an hour later they stood together as bridemaid and groomsman, with not a trace of what had passed in their faces. They mutually shunned each other that evening, and were both heartily glad when it was over, and they were free to go to their rooms for quiet and thought. Earl had brought his small fortune home with him, to invest it there, and having not yet made up his mind as to the best way, the money was still in his possession; and as he went to his trunk and saw the package there, he thought how gladly he would give it all up if he could stand just where he did five years before, and have his happiness in his own hands again. He did not know how soon part of the wish was to be realized! Just before daybreak of that eventful night he was awakened by the awful cry of "Fire!" and sprang to his feet, only to find the very

room he was in in a blaze, and to hear the fire rushing swiftly through the other parts of the house. He fought his way out—how, he never knew, and, blinded and almost suffocated, he reeled out on the lawn, to find all the family there but himself, his sisters screaming with fright, and his mother upon her knees praying for her boy, whom they had tried in vain to raise.

"Where is Eugenie?" he asked.

"She was here a few moments ago," said Pet, wildly, "and asked for you. O my God!" she cried, pointing toward one of the windows of the burning house, where the slight figure of the girl was plainly visible, "she has gone back."

With a numbed dead feeling he watched her pass into the room—it seemed to him into the very jaws of death—and the next moment, with burned bleeding fingers he was climbing up the lattice-work of the old porch, that was still unharmed, calling her with every breath to come to him. And she came with unhesitating confidence to his arms; and he brought her safely down. When they had reached a little summer-house apart from the rest, he did not release her, but stood looking deep into her eyes.

"Why did you go back into the burning house, Eugenie?" he asked.

"Because I thought you were still there," she said, almost in a whisper.

"And why should you have cared?"

"Because—O Earl! I love you. I have always loved you!" And she buried her face in his bosom.

"My darling!" he whispered. "But, Eugenie," he said, "do you know I am even a poorer man than I was five years ago? for I lost everything I have made in that fire, and we shall have the struggle all over again."

"But together, Earl," she said, lifting her glorious eyes with the lovelight in their depths to his.

"Yes, darling, together!"

And so in the midst of that awful scene love conquered; and though Earl and Eugenie Courtney are not rich yet, and probably never will be, they are infinitely happy—their only regret those five wasted years.

LOVE THAT WAS BORN OF SORROW.

BY LOUISE DUPEE.

ALL Fairview was music-mad. In summer, when the doors and windows of its pretty vine-wreathed houses were open, there was such a din from the united sounds of violins, pianos, guitars, organs, flutes, clarionets and I don't know what not, that it was enough to drive one distracted. From one house echoed a hornpipe, from another pealed a hymn in solemn contradiction; here, tinkled the airiest waltz or the maddest and most rattling of polkas, there, one of the heaviest and grandest composition of Beethoven or Mozart.

From one house a voice was heard piping a rollicking air from Christie's minstrels, from the next the chanting of the doleful strains of a mass. From this quartersounded the frantic screams of an opera singer, from that the soft melody of a plaintive love song with a hand-organ playing the Fisher's Hornpipe for an accompaniment. There were always hand-organs in the streets of Fairview. Then there was the great music-school, the pride of the place, in the centre of the village. What a confusion of sounds issued therefrom at all hours of the day and far into the night!

In winter, of course, the town was comparatively silent. At least it was a much subdued chorus that assailed one's ears while walking through the broad pleasant streets; and if there had been birds in the spreading branches overhead then, one might have heard their songs, but in summer their fainter melody was drowned completely by the energetic musicians within doors. Every other man in Fairview carried a violin case and wore long hair. Every other woman, rosy girls and all, wore glasses, and carried a music-roll, and had also, habitually, a sort of learned, edified and sentimental air, as if, even in the street, they were listening still to the enchanting strains which Herr Meyer drew from his violin, or those which rose from the keys of the piano under the magic touch of Professor Steiner, at the last concert given by the Fairview Musical Institute.

Not only for its musical advantages was Fairview famous, but for the peculiar softness and salubrity of its atmosphere. Sheltered by great hills on the north and east, it

showed its sunny southern face to the sea, whose balmy but bracing salt breezes, even in the sultriest of summer days, made the leaves rustle, and the long shaded streets delightfully cool. From the west blew the balm of the pine woods that overlooked the town, and in the sharpest of midwinter sturdy little pansies often blossomed in the village gardens. Any sharper than a south-west wind seemed to be expressly forbidden by the clerk of the weather to run at large in sunny Fairview. Hither, in an evil hour for his peace of mind, came Mr. Robert Ross, a grave, nervous, middle-aged bachelor, who loved quiet above all things, and detested music, especially the loud voice of a piano. He had heard of the musical habits of Fairview people, and objected strongly to taking up his abode there, on that account, for a few months even, but was imperatively ordered to do so by his physician, who had discovered some unsoundness in his lungs. As the Ross family had all died of consumption, the need of caution was obvious.

"I may as well die one way as another, and I am sure I never should survive all the Fairview tooting, and tumming, and musical conversation," said Mr. Ross, in the most doleful accents.

"Nonsense!" said the doctor, laughing. "You can board in a family where they are not musical, or else take your housekeeper, Mrs. Maitland, down there and keep house. I don't know as you would be able to find a house, though. They say that everything habitable there is usually inhabited, summer and winter. Fairview is a popular place, you know."

"I should think it would be," groaned Mr. Ross. "They say there's such a continual racket there that one can neither think by day nor sleep by night, and two-thirds of the inhabitants are professors of music, and shrill-voiced, opera-screaming women. I doubt, from what I hear, if I can find one family that isn't musical, where I might abide in peace. I tell you, doctor, I can't go to Fairview."

"O," said the doctor, merrily, "it can't be as bad as that. I'm sure you will be able to find some refuge that is undisturbed by

opera-singing or pianoforte 'recitals,' as they call it, now-a-days. But I shouldn't wonder if you should fall in love with the divine art yourself in time, or it's more likely with one of the fair artists—the 'opera-screaming women!' Pretty girls in Fairview; I've noticed that myself. The wholesome air makes them rosy."

"Heaven forbid!" exclaimed the poor gentleman, shuddering, even at the mere thought of such a thing. And as the doctor was taking his leave he assured him that he could not make up his mind to go to Fairview.

But he did go, after all, for his cough grew worse, and he became so alarmed that he was willing to do anything. Early one bright September morning he found himself on the Fairhaven streets, meeting no one but musicians, and his ears aching with the most horrible confusion of sounds he had ever heard; more dreadful and distracting even than those which haunted his dreams after the evening on which he ventured to take his sweetheart to the opera, in his days of youthful endurance and courage. She was too musical, so he gave her up, and she married a musical gentleman, which was very wise and proper. He had never regretted her very sorely.

The windows of the Institute were open, and from them issued every conceivable sound; the rumbling of organs, the rattling of pianos, the twittering of flutes, the scraping of violins, all in the direst discord, and worse than all these, the vocal part of the entertainment which soared above everything else. At first Mr. Ross thought that there must be a lunatic asylum in the immediate vicinity, and these prolonged "ah's," that sounded, now in the deepest gutturals, and then took eccentric flights into the air, were the groans of its distracted inmates. Then he concluded that the whole village was mad, for as he hurried up the street the same sound greeted his ear from almost every house, mingled with tones of a piano. It was the morning hour, you know, and all the girls were eager to improve in practising while they were fresh and their voices in a good condition.

"O music, music!" groaned the unfortunate gentleman. Stopping his ears with his fingers he wished more devoutly than ever that the "heavenly maid had died young." If he had not considered it a case of life and death he would not have abided an hour in

Fairview, though he could not fail to recognize its beauty and wonderfully pleasant atmosphere, even in the midst of his distress.

He approached the principal hotel (there were two hotels in town), but as he neared the door a new edition of the vocal exercises greeted his ears, too shrill and terrible to be endured for an instant. Mr. Ross beat a hasty retreat, never stopping to look back once, until he reached the other hotel. It looked like the very abode of peace from a distance, its snow-white walls embowered in green leaves, muslin and lace curtains waving in its windows. On the smooth, green, sleepy-looking lawn in front was seated a quiet group enjoying the freshness of the morning. Mr. Ross took heart, for the house was quite by itself, and if there were no musical boarders therein one might, indeed, find it a peaceful refuge, the village din would be so subdued before it reached there. But alas! he was doomed to disappointment. As if for his special benefit, as soon as he crossed the threshold of the door, some one struck up a lively jig on the piano. However it was only *one* piano, not a half dozen sounding together, and as yet the air was unburdened by the maddening vocal exercises, and Mr. Ross thought he might venture to remain long enough to procure some refreshment, as he felt the need of it sorely, and was very tired. Then he would make a desperate effort to find some family who were not musical, and would take pity on him and take him in.

On making inquiries, he found that both hotels were full of the Institute pupils, and the clerk could not think for his life of one family in all the village that was not musical, more or less. Mr. Ross walked the streets in despair again. He met troops of the rosy Institute girls, giggling and humming bits of song as they strolled along, and one very pretty one, with saucy brown eyes and a dimpled chin, who was trilling a bar of *Il Segreto*—"It is better to laugh than to be sighing," seemed to find something very amusing in his appearance, and laughed in his face.

"Wellbred young ladies, upon my word; but then one can't expect to find good manners among such music-mad people! I wonder what they saw about me that was so laughable!"

Mr. Ross didn't realize what a desperate expression his face wore. He was weary enough, but he still kept walking until at

last he chanced to meet a gentleman who did not look at all musical. He was not bald, nor did he wear long hair, and there were no eccentricities about his dress, and moreover his face wore a bright common-sense expression which Mr. Ross thought was refreshing to behold after meeting so many lackadaisical musical ones, and pert, conceited musical ones, and absent-minded, half-insane looking musical ones. He made haste to accost him, and into his ear, which he knew must be sympathetic, poured the tale of his distress.

The gentleman was very courteous, though he seemed rather inclined to laugh; but perceiving that Mr. Ross was in real trouble, he listened to him with a face as serious as he could possibly make it under the circumstances.

"I really can't think of one family in town, sir, that has not one or more musical members," said he, in answer to his inquiries. "We are nearly all of us musical in Fairview."

"But you are not musical yourself?" said Mr. Ross, assuredly.

"Why, no, not exactly; that is, I do not perform on any instrument or sing; but I like music extremely, and my house rings with it continually. My children promise to be fine singers."

Mr. Ross was glad that he had no children to become fine singers, but detained this unfortunate papa a little longer, begging to be directed to the least musical of the Fairview houses, where they might be persuaded to open their doors to a distressed stranger. The gentleman considered a moment, then looking up brightly, said:

"I know the very place for you, that is, if you can endure one musical person for a little while. I think I understood you to say that you were to spend the winter here? There is a widow lady, living in the prettiest place in all Fairview, who I think would be quite happy to receive you into her household, though she never has taken boarders, as she is in rather straitened circumstances. There are only three in her family, herself and two daughters. She is not at all musical, neither is one of her daughters; the other one is very musical. She sings in church, and is the pride of our Institute. I suppose she must practise a great deal at home, but she is going away soon to teach music at a young ladies' school in an adjoining town. I don't know how soon, but I think by the middle of next month. Mrs.

Trevor is the lady's name, and she lives just beyond the village, near the beach. There is a fine sea view from her windows, I assure you, sir."

Mr. Ross thought of the vocal exercises and shuddered; but after all it was better fortune than he had expected. The house was remote from the din of the village, a long blessed distance from the Institute, and there was only one musical person in it. She could not sing all the time, thank Heaven! and there would be intervals of heavenly peace. He would request a room as far as possible from the scene of action, and keep his doors tightly closed. Yes, he could endure it for one month, he thought, and his face brightened up wonderfully as he thanked the gentleman for his politeness.

Following his directions, he soon found himself at the Widow Trevor's door. It was truly the prettiest place in all Fairview. Mr. Ross thought so as he stood under the woodbine on the broad piazza; a tranquil home-like place too, with drooping branches over the roof of the old mansion, and sunshine streaming through its wide doors, that stood open after the Fairview fashion. For a wonder, there was no sound of either voice or piano from within, but a little late bird, anxious to fill every pause, sang amid the colored maple leaves.

Mr. Ross did not object to the music of nature, however, and waited a little before ringing to enjoy the scene before him. There was the sea, in the delicious golden September haze, flecked with sleepy floating sails. A strip of silvery beach, seen through a vista of red leaves, was on one side; on the other, a road that wound, with as many curves as a brook, over hills and through woods, now lost, now peeping out again, to a distant village that clustered on a hill, and seemed ambitious to show every one of its white houses and its picturesque church spire, in spite of the crowding trees. It was a very pretty picture, in all the sunshine and autumn color, and Mr. Ross thought that it could not be dreary even in winter. But to tell the truth, though there was nothing he usually liked more than such a scene, he did not enjoy this very much, his nerves had been so cruelly shattered by his morning's experience. The silence was too sweet to last long, and he waited, with the same sensations that a very timid person feels when he expects every moment to hear the explosion of a cannon close at his ears, for the sudden piping

up of the vocal exercises. But it did not come, and Mr. Ross turned around and rang the doorbell.

A pair of little feet came pattering lightly down the wide staircase, and a saucy girlish face confronted him, with a sort of amused and blushing surprise. He recognized those brown eyes at once as the ones which had found his appearance so amusing in the street. Inquiring for Mrs. Trevor, he was led by the merry damsel into a most inviting but very modestly furnished parlor—inviting, even though it was strewn with sheet-music from one end to the other, and conspicuous in its centre stood an ugly old-fashioned piano, with a song from one of Bellini's operas open on the rack; a guitar was suspended by a blue ribbon from the wall, and over the mantel-piece, side by side with an exquisite Madonna, was the silly photographed face of some prominent opera singer. Then there was a bronze bust of Beethoven on a little stand, and over it the fascinating picture of a monkey playing on a violin.

The young lady disappeared in search of Mrs. Trevor, and Mr. Ross had time to notice all these things before she entered the room. He was very favorably impressed with her appearance. She was a motherly-looking elderly lady, with silver in her hair, and brown eyes, like those of her daughter, only they were softened and saddened by time and sorrow. She had a low sympathetic voice, and the sweetest smile imaginable. Her visitor was embarrassed, and hesitated to make known his errand; but after praising the beauty of her place in the most glowing terms, until Mrs. Trevor's brown eyes really sparkled with delight—for pride in the old homestead which had belonged for generations to her family, not the Trevors, was her weak point—he ventured to beg for a shelter under her roof. She hesitated a little, and asked to be excused for a few moments, while she consulted her daughters on the subject. She was afraid that he would be very much disturbed before Del went away, if music was so disagreeable to him, for she was obliged to practise a good deal, and then they were likely to have musical company in the evening.

Mr. Ross thought he could endure it if he could be accommodated with an attic room for a while. The music, unless it were very loud, would hardly soar as high as that, or at least it would lose its shrillness before it

reached there, and be faint and indistinct; and as there were no other houses very near, nothing but sounds from below would be likely to trouble him at all.

"Well," said Mrs. Trevor, seeming pleased with this arrangement, "the attic rooms are as pleasant and comfortable as any in the house—pleasanter, indeed, the view is so fine from the windows."

So in a very short time everything was concluded satisfactorily; that very afternoon Mr. Ross took possession of his room, and very nice and cosy he found it. As Mrs. Trevor remarked, there was a delightful view from the windows of broad green fields and bowery woods, as well as the sea, with its silvery beach and foam-capped waves, and at dusk the strange cheery lights from two lighthouses flashed out with the stars.

Much refreshed in mind and body, for not one harrowing note of song, save those of the birds, had reached his ears since he had crossed that happy threshold, Mr. Ross ran lightly down stairs at the summons of the teabell. To be sure he rather dreaded meeting that saucy musical young lady; he was sure she was the musical one. He was not fond of the society of young ladies generally, by any means, and musical ones were his special horror. Musical women were even worse than musical men. Then this one was uncommonly illbred. He wondered that her mother had not brought her up in a different manner, for she seemed the pink of perfection herself.

Margaret, the elder of the two daughters, and the *unmusical* one, seemed a very quiet inoffensive person, for a young lady. She was tall and graceful, had a finely-shaped head, and there was an air of high-breeding about her. This Mr. Ross noticed at the first glance, then looked no more. He rarely honored any young lady with more than one glance. On being introduced to him, she behaved as any persons in their senses should; merely bowed and murmured a few civil words; but that saucy little Dell—what an insignificant-looking little brown thing she was!—swept a sort of courtesy; then, after biting her lips until they were purple, laughed outright! That was the second time she had laughed in his face since he came to Fairview. Mrs. Trevor looked distressed, and Miss Trevor displeased and surprised. Mr. Ross applied himself to his bread and butter with an air of stately indifference; but at an unlucky moment, chance

ing to meet the brown eyes over his teacup—the brown eyes shy, and penitent, but still holding a spark of fun—the sight so discomposed him that his face grew scarlet, and he hardly knew what he was doing or where he was. He committed all sorts of eccentricities, put butter into his tea, and poured milk into his preserves, swallowing both mixtures with a sort of surprised look which nearly convulsed Miss Dell. Rising from the table as soon as etiquette would permit, he made the best of his way to his retreat up stairs, but not swiftly enough to escape the sound of a smothered laugh which followed him up the staircase.

"Why, Dell, what does ail you! I never was so mortified in my life! What do you suppose Mr. Ross thinks of you?" Mrs. Trevor began, as soon as he was fairly out of hearing.

"Indeed," said Margaret, "I never saw any one behave so in my life. What has come over you, Dell?" But she was laughing herself.

"O," screamed Dell, "he's the funniest man I ever saw; he looks so sort of surprised and desperate, and then his horror of music is so comical! One of the girls told me that she saw him going by the Institute this morning with his fingers in his ears. I met him afterwards, and he looked wild. Then did you see how queerly he acted at the table? How should you relish buttered tea, Margaret?" And she went off into another convulsion of laughter.

"It is no wonder that he acted queerly, with you laughing in his face all the time! He must have had a good opinion of your breeding. I saw Margaret smiling, too. The poor gentleman is ill and nervous, and if we have any more of this, you needn't come to the table at all, Delphine."

"Well," said Del, "I'd rather not, for I shall suffer in trying to keep from laughing." And with these words she ran away to escape any further scolding.

"I shall have time to have a deal of fun with Mr. Robert Ross (that's the name on his trunks), before I leave home," she remarked to Margaret that evening.

Mr. Ross slept well that night. The house was as quiet as quiet could be; only the soft soothing murmur of the sea stole in at the open window and mingled with his dreams, and when morning came he felt better than he had done for a long time. The air was like balm, and never were such clear blue

skies as the Fairview skies, he thought; never such fragrant exhilarating winds. What a pity that such a place should be monopolized by such a set of people! "Every prospect pleases, and only man is vile," quoting from the missionary hymn. The night before, when he left the tea-table, he made a determination to leave Mrs. Trevor's, leave the village, by the first train in the morning; but now he had altered that determination, deeming it unwise. Why should he heed the impertinence of that chit of a girl? It was unpleasant, to be sure, to be obliged to come in contact with such lowbred people, but he would endure it, since the Fairview air was likely to cure him entirely. So he marched down to breakfast, with a brave determined air, but encountering Miss Dell in the hall, though she was demure enough but for the gleam of mischief which always would stay in her eyes, he was somewhat ruffled, both in feeling and manner, when he entered the breakfast-room. Why, he could not tell, and was so provoked at himself!

The young lady was shy and silent, however, and everything passed off well and pleasantly. Mr. Ross thought Mrs. Trevor a remarkably pleasant lady, and tried his best to make himself agreeable to her. He *could* be agreeable to elderly married ladies. He was well posted on almost every topic, was a refined and cultivated gentleman, and had travelled the world over. But in Miss Dell's presence, for some reason or other, his tongue was tied; he could only say yes or no in reply to some remark of Mrs. Trevor's or Margaret's between his sips of coffee.

That forenoon he found that Dell's voice was loud indeed; it came to his ears in his lofty chamber with startling distinctness, and such hideous screams he never heard. But happily the weather was as warm and balmy as midsummer, and Mr. Ross betook himself to the beach at once. On going down stairs, he found not only the parlor door wide open, but also every other door between it and the far-away attic. Purely accidental, probably. In the afternoon it was still again, for Miss Dell had gone to the Institute. Mr. Ross came down into the parlor, and made himself so entertaining to Mrs. Trevor and Margaret, that they expressed themselves afterwards as being quite in love with him.

"I never was so agreeably disappointed in any one in my life," said Margaret.

"Better set your cap for him," said Dell,

"and return with him into the sky to keep away from the sounds of earth. I wonder he doesn't build himself a tower in the woods, but probably he would find the owls and crows too musical. I'll tell you what I am going to recommend to him—living in a balloon that is all ready to go up any time; so if a band, or piano, or anything of that kind should strike up near him he could just pull the string and be out of hearing in an instant. Isn't that an idea?"

Days passed, and Mr. Ross had hardly exchanged one word with Miss Dell, and Miss Dell's singing increased in shrillness daily, and though Mr. Ross was very careful always to close the doors between her domain and his on going up and down, he would find them open on peeping from his own door a few minutes afterwards, especially just as Miss Dell commenced practising. It was very mysterious. But he did not mind it so very much in pleasant weather, for he had sent for his horses and carriage from town (such an elegant turnout that it made all the Fairview people stare), and could drive away from the sound at any time. Stormy days he stuffed his keyhole, and the crack under his door with cotton, and when the screams were loudest, his ears, also, with the same, and made the best of it. The evenings were the most unendurable, for then, especially in inclement weather, came a young man who played on the violin, a teacher in the Institute, who seemed to be an admirer of Miss Dell's, and his playing was only equalled by her singing, and often they had her voice at its shrillest, the piano at its loudest and most dreadful bang, and the violin at its sharpest, all going at the same time. Mr. Ross prayed for endurance and lived through it all. But he found that he never knew what suffering was until Mrs. Trevor was unexpectedly called away from home by the serious illness of her sister who lived in another State. Margaret was confined to her room by a sprained ankle, and Miss Dell reigned supreme over the household.

Wasn't there music enough, then!

At first it was dreadful to be obliged to sit alone with her at the table, though she wore the most bewitching pink dress ever seen on those occasions, presided over the table with the prettiest grace imaginable, and was very demure and gracious in her manner towards the gentleman opposite her. Unfortunately, he had overheard a little remark of hers, made to Margaret a few days previous, and

now her winning ways only served to make him the more stiff and unbending.

"I shall cultivate him, certainly, Margaret," said she, "those horses of his are so magnificent! I'm almost dying to ride after them. I shall make him ask me to drive with him once in a while, see if I don't! O, I shall be as sweet to him as ever I can be, and wont Carl Meyer be jealous?"

Mr. Ross asked Margaret to drive with him the next day, and on the beach they met Dell walking with Mr. Meyer, leaning on his arm, and talking gayly. For some unaccountable cause the sight made that unreasonable Mr. Ross angry. Perhaps it was the mere sight of Mr. Meyer, for above all the world he hated "violin-scraping men."

On another day he asked Margaret again, and had very often invited Mrs. Trevor to accompany him on his long aimless drives; but though he had passed Dell, while driving many and many a time, he had never even hinted such a thing to her.

But Dell did not seem to notice it at all; she was just as merry, and just as gracious as ever, and took such long walks with Mr. Meyer!

Mr. Ross had fallen into a singular habit of watching her of late. He was always sure to be at the window when she went to take her lesson at the Institute, and also when she came back again. If he missed seeing her he was disappointed. He contrived to meet her in her walks, and always lingered long in the dining-room to talk with Mrs. Trevor and Margaret, when she was by. He was on a more familiar footing with Margaret than he had been with any young lady for years. She was much to his taste, reserved, and quiet, and ladylike, had never played a note on the piano, and did not go into ecstasies over the opera. So superior to her sister, and yet there was something bewitching about that little brown thing, after all, silly, and rude, and illbred as she was! He was not anxious for the time to come when she should take her departure for the Young Ladies Seminary, and yet was she not the torment of his life?

Mr. Ross grew a puzzle to himself. Never, since his youthful days of tight boots and soul-absorbing neckties, had he been so particular as regarded his toilet. Of late years he had been sublimely indifferent to his looks, and had clung to one coat until it became positively shabby, because it was comfortable; as for a "stylish fit," he never gave a single

thought to the thing. But since he had taken up his abode in Fairview his tailor was astonished to receive one order after another for the most costly garments from him, and Mr. Ross was so particular about their being of the latest and most elegant style!

Dress was certainly a great improvement to his appearance. Mrs. Trevor and Margaret considered him a fine-looking gentleman, but Dell only laughed at his superfluous length. And indeed he *was* rather tall.

I think that if Mrs. Trevor could have foreseen what the state of affairs would be at home after her departure, even though her sister were at the very point of death, she would have remained at her post as mistress of the household, or else she would have sent Miss Dell away before she ventured to leave. For as soon as she was fairly out of sight the mischief began in good earnest. That very afternoon, with the aid of some twelve of the Institute girls, Dell gave a grand concert in the hall, and such a concert as it was! It might have been heard for miles. It consisted chiefly of singing, and the singing was accompanied by the music of banjos, and violins, and jewsharps, and combs, or at least Mr. Ross judged so by the sounds which seemed fairly beating on his brain. The weather was damp and cloudy, and he was afflicted with a severe cold, but such a fearful din as that was not to be endured. It would be full as cheerful to die of quick consumption as to spend one's days in a madhouse. So rushing down the back stairs he hurried to the beach, and as it commenced to rain took refuge in an old bathhouse.

Dell looked very much surprised and disconcerted when she espied him coming forlornly home at twilight, for she had supposed him to be in his room all the afternoon, and had kept up the entertainment until only a few moments before.

"How provoking," said she to her bosom friend, Sallie Lane, "that we should have exerted ourselves so for nothing!"

But there was another edition of the same thing in the evening, and he could not miss it, for it was raining fast, and Dell heard him coughing on the landing. He would not go out with that cold.

The next morning Mr. Ross came down to breakfast looking like a ghost, and Dell, though her eyes danced more than ever, felt a few pangs of remorse. To make amends for her bad conduct she saw that everything he especially liked was prepared for dinner,

and even went so far as to cut a dainty little bouquet from her own pet plants in the window, at sight of which Mr. Ross blushed with delight. He was very fond of flowers.

"I never knew any one to like flowers and not like music," remarked Dell.

"Why, I do like real music!" said Mr. Ross. "I don't like *noise*, but I enjoy a bird's song, and I remember when I was a boy my mother used to sing simple English and Scotch ballads that sounded very pleasantly."

Dell colored and was silent. Mr. Ross had never spoken as many words to her at a time before, and she considered him saucy. She wondered if he thought she was doing her best at music in the fearful screams and piano poundings she had been executing for his benefit. Did ever such a stupid creature exist before? So he liked *real music* but didn't like *noise*!

But the noise did not cease, by any means, and poor Mr. Ross, hopeless and helpless, confined to the house at length by a fearful hoarseness and sore throat, was obliged to endure it all without a murmur. Half the girls in the village were domiciled in the house to keep Dell company. They danced until every window in the house shook and rattled. There were duets on the piano, solos on the guitar, and jewsharp, and accordion, and lusty vocal efforts all at the same time, at every hour of the day and night. In vain Margaret scolded, and threatened to send for her mother, and if Mr. Ross looked particularly pale and martyr-like it only made matters worse.

But the crisis was at hand, as politicians say at every election. Mrs. Trevor was expected home in a day or two, and Dell had her trunks already packed for Laurel Bank Seminary. The young lady was determined to have one more good frolic while she might. Mr. Ross was feverish that day. He had taken another cold before he was well over the first, and was hardly able to sit up. His mind was in a better state, however, and his head comparatively clear, for the house had been entirely quiet and peaceful thus far, and he had only heard Dell's voice once, which was when she was mimicking a chickadee in the dooryard, and it was not unpleasant to hear. But alas for the luckless gentleman! He little knew what was in store for him. Towards eight o'clock, just as he was snugly in bed, for his head ached so he could sit up no longer, a vigorous bell ringing and

the sound of strange voices echoed through the house.

"O," thought Mr. Ross, a dreadful presentiment of evil waking in his breast, "Miss Dell is going to have a party!"

His surmise was correct. Dell was going to have a party, and a musical one at that. She had invited every musical youth and every musical maiden in town. Every youth who was the possessor of a violin or flute, or any other musical instrument of the kind, was especially requested to bring it with him, and the request was complied with. There were as many as sixteen violins in all, nearly the same number of flutes, beside a quantity of brass instruments. It was a clear October night, lighted by the yellow harvest moon, just the most bewitching moon to frolic or make love under, and none of those who were bidden to the party stayed away, I assure you. The large parlor and the yard were both full, and at about nine o'clock the rather uncommon orchestra struck up with a will. Every violin was in motion, every flute piping its shrillest, every brass instrument sounding its loudest clang through some harum-scarum polka. Now and then, through it all, was heard the sharp voice of the piano.

Mr. Ross started up in terror, his brain was all in a whirl. The hot blood seemed to be bursting through his forehead, his thoughts were confused, and he felt almost as if he were growing mad. He would not and could not endure it; he was really ill, and this terrible confusion of sound would kill him.

But it was in vain that he pulled his bell, it could not be heard above the din which filled the whole air roundabout as well as the house. In vain he screamed to Debby, the maid-of-all-work, who was a good soul and would have helped him if she could. So he could only creep under the bedclothes again and resign himself to the inevitable. At last it all grew into a sort of nightmare. He imagined that the room was full of terrible beings who were intent upon taking his life, and that one was beating him on the head with the leg of a piano, every blow causing the most exquisite pain. His lips were dry and parched with fever, and even his eyeballs were burning.

Then the scene would change, and he would imagine himself to be in a falling building, himself crushed to atoms, and the groans of the dead and dying reaching his ears from every side.

It was late when the party broke up, Dell choosing the grass plat directly under Mr. Ross's window for the performance of the last piece—a serenade, but not as soft and tender as serenades usually are. Then the good-nights went round in high glee.

The next morning Dell came down late, half dreading to meet Mr. Ross at the breakfast-table. But he was not in his accustomed place, though he was usually so punctual, making his appearance at the first ringing of the bell. After waiting till everything was cold, she sent Debby up to his door to inquire if he were ill and would have his breakfast sent up. Debby came back looking very serious and troubled.

"He didn't answer when I spoke to him, though I pounded on the door and spoke two or three times. But I'm sure I heard him kind of moan, Miss Dell; he must be very sick. I think he looked so yesterday."

And indeed the poor gentleman was very sick. When Debby opened his door, a while later, by means of a key which Dell had found to fit the lock, she found him tossing on his pillow in a high fever and muttering wildly and incoherently. Dell, stung to the soul with fear and remorse, took her post at his bedside and left it scarcely a moment for many long weeks. The doctor despaired of his life, at first, pronouncing it one of the very worst cases of typhoid fever, and remarked that his brain was affected in an uncommon degree. Mrs. Trevor came home and would have banished Dell from the sick room at once, having no faith in her ability as nurse, but Dell was determined to stay. Noting with wonder how skillfully she did minister to the patient's wants, after all, moving about the room in her little slippers as if she were shod with down, careful that not even the rattle of a teaspoon should disturb the sensitive ear of the poor sufferer, Dell's mother made no remonstrance. So by night and day, through such long and tedious hours, until the watcher's cheek was nearly as pale as that of her charge after the fever had left it, she lingered in the darkened room. Never had he seen so careful and patient a little nurse, said the doctor.

But when the announcement that he was entirely out of danger came, it was such a joy to Dell that she could not resist the impulse to run down stairs and indulge in a little burst of song and an old-fashioned dance through the halls.

He was no longer delirious, but had long

been conscious whose form it was that flitted so softly about his bed, whose hand it was that was so cool and tender on his heated forehead, whose presence was more soothing than any other could have been, and now in these weak languid days he grew sad and fretful if she were out of his sight one moment. She made him all sorts of incredible dainties, brought him flowers, and when he was able to bear it, read to him in a voice which he deemed "real music." And he would lie gazing into her face with the unquestioning delight of a child.

On one of these days Dell came into the room while he was, or seemed to be, sleeping very soundly, with one transparent hand against his cheek. She came and stood by him, noting, so remorsefully, how hollow his temples had grown, how sharp was the outline of the fine clear-cut features, and how worn and sad was the expression of the marble-white brow.

"I am the cause of it all," she thought. "I have been so wicked and so foolish! but I thought he was only cross and fussy; I didn't suppose that the noise would affect him so seriously;" and obeying some sudden impulse, she stooped to touch his brow with her lips, never so lightly and softly, and as she did so she left a tear there too. To her surprise and consternation, the sleeper suddenly opened his eyes and his pale cheek reddened.

"Dell," he whispered, stretching out his arm to detain her. But in a breathing space Dell was down stairs, and the tenderest entreaty would not have induced her to enter the room again that day. She decided never to do so again, never to see Mr. Ross again in her shamefacedness. But the next morning Debby privately brought her a little note—not a very short one, either, but full of almost unintelligible words which must have been very powerful, for with the brightest of roses in her cheeks, and happy but downcast eyes, directly after reading it she *did* go up into that attic room. Mrs. Trevor was there, too, and after a brief reading of Dell's shy smiling face, Mr. Ross asked that lady if she would give her daughter to him, taking Dell's little fluttering brown hand into his own.

"I cannot wait to know my fate," said he; "perhaps I am not a very suitable match for Dell, in some respects, but if she does not find my peculiarities so very objectionable, why should you?"

Mrs. Trevor tried to speak, but her breath was gone through sheer surprise; yet she gave him her hand.

"But," said Dell, doubtfully, through her blushes, "I couldn't give up singing; you know I can't help singing;" and the mischievous brown eyes grew very serious and sad.

"That you shall not, my bobolink. But we won't have any more such singing as we have had since I have been here, will we? Haven't you got nearly through practising vocal exercises? and I know you couldn't sing in opera to save your life. Your voice isn't tuned for it." And there was a brighter gleam of fun in his eyes than she had ever seen there before.

"I don't see how you can care for me," said Dell, half sobbing, "I've been so disagreeable! I made you sick and—"

"Don't let us talk of the past, now, my darling," said he, interrupting her. "You did not make me ill; I was ill before the happening of your grand concert. I should have had the fever under any circumstances, though I can't say but that the noise *did* almost madden me. But I am quite sure you would not have gotten up such an entertainment if you had realized what it would be to me. I'm a nervous, fussy old fellow, but I don't think we shall be unhappy together. I fell in love with you in spite of myself long ago, Dell, though I hardly understood what had come over me. I hardly knew myself, why I disliked Mr. Meyer; but now I know very well. That concert was a happy event after all—a *blessed* event; for if it had not come off, perhaps I never should have learned to know you so well. I never should have realized what a loving little heart you hid under all that mischief, for you would not have come into my sick room and taken such tender, patient care of me, if you had not felt a little pang of remorse, and you would never have loved me. 'Twas only pity that you felt at first, was it, my dear? Pity is akin to love, you know, and I can't help fearing it is only that which you feel, now."

But Mr. Ross was relieved on that point, at once, and a most delightful state of things reigned in the household.

When he had quite recovered his health and strength, Mr. Ross went back to town and took his little bride with him. How the doctor laughed when he was made acquainted with the result of Mr. Ross's sojourn in Fairview!

“I told you there were pretty girls there, but how was it with the music?” he said.

Mr. Ross made some evasive answer. Mrs. Ross is a very happy little woman, and still sings like a bobolink, and Mr. Ross listens

to her voice with delight. But she has left off practising exercises, and seldom gives musical entertainments of any kind, though her husband has consented to take up his abode in Fairview.

LUCIA'S ESCAPADE.

MATTIE WINFIELD TORREY

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LUCIA'S ESCAPADE.

BY MATTIE WINFIELD TORREY.

AUNT JEM'S nose was in the air and her capstrings were flying. When Aunt Jem's nose went up and her capstrings became unfastened, you might be sure something was in the wind. Planting her feet firmly, and moving with the air of a grenadier, she strode in the direction of the kitchen.

"Cindy," she said, "see that the dinner is on the table precisely at twelve o'clock. Blow the horn ten minutes before noon. Don't let the bread burn, and keep the pudding boiling constantly. I'm going over to Centreville on business, and shan't be back before the middle of the afternoon. You keep

your eyes open and see that things go on straight; and if that Clem Myers stops to talk with you when he'd ought to be at work, you mind and start him off about his business. I can't afford to pay him wages and have him idlin' about the house. Now look sharp."

Aunt Jem, unlike Mrs. Boffin, was not a "high-flyer after fashion," so it did not take her many minutes to don her Sunday fixings, and, once attired, she was ready to step into the venerable chaise which Tom, her errand-boy and general factotum, had just driven to the door. Taking the reins from

her small servitor, Aunt Jem gave him numerous directions concerning keeping the hens out of the garden and himself out of mischief generally; and, severely majestic in the conscious rectitude of her virtuous maiden life, drove off at Dobbin's best rate of speed. That Tom would instantly proceed to stand on his head with his dirty feet in the air, and then take himself off, and for the remainder of the day know nought except the dear delights of fishing for minnows, in company with one or two cronies, had not been revealed to Aunt Jem's consciousness; consequently she rode on through the summer sunshine, fearing no evil and knowing no guile. Nevertheless, she was not a little disturbed in mind.

Aunt Jemima Bradshaw was a maiden lady of uncertain age, owner of Oakland, the best farm in the township. She was capable, clear-headed, ready to act at a moment's notice to deal with any sort of business perplexity; able—as she had proved for years—to carry on her farm without the aid of any agent, overseer or business manager whatever; still, the errand upon which she was now bound perplexed her not a little. Had Aunt Jem been a woman of ordinary capacity, I should have said, once for all, that she was nervous; but since she had never been known to possess such an article as nerves, I suppose I had best make no insinuations.

To tell the truth, the prime cause of Aunt Jem's worryment was a letter which she had that morning received, giving her the unexpected information that her niece, Lucia Lindencourt, was to be sent to her guardianship for the remainder of the summer. Now Lucia was an orphan, a beauty, an heiress, and, withal, a most inveterate flirt; Aunt Jem had heard that much, though she had not seen the girl since she was a mere infant in short frocks. The child of her only sister and a French father, left to the guardianship of that father's family, and reared in the artificial atmosphere of a city, was not, in Aunt Jem's estimation, a desirable acquisition; and to have the girl cast thus upon her hands without warning, was decomposing, to say the least.

Driving briskly forward, past green fields and through fragrant winding forest roads, up hill and down dale, Aunt Jem thus soliloquized:

"I expect that girl has been getting into trouble with her hundred and one admirers. I more than suspect that she is sent away

up here in order to put an end to some foolish flirtation or other. There's one comfort, she'll have to behave herself while she's with me. In the first place, there's no one within ten miles with whom she'll care to flirt, and in the next place, I won't have such goin's on." And Aunt Jem gave Dobbin's reins a vigorous shake, and he rattled over a bridge and half way up a hill in gallant style.

"Poor child!" continued she; "never's been taught better, I dare say; what with the French blood in her, and all her father's relations about her from her very cradle, who's to blame her for what's been instilled with every breath she has drawn? The Lindencourts, indeed! I remember they had the manners of a dancing master, but for any ideas of usefulness or energetic action—bah!" And Aunt Jem's nose went up in huge disgust, while her bonnet strings vibrated in sympathy. "Well, I'll see what can be done. Perhaps I can make something of her yet; at all events, I shall do my duty." With which Spartan-like resolution she whipped up under the lee side of the station, fastened Dobbin, and proceeded to inquire as to the arrival of the train which was to bring her niece.

"Train's due, ma'am," said a brisk official; "there's the whistle now." And in another minute, with a shriek and a roar, the engine shot past and came to a dead stop.

Aunt Jem was on the alert.

She had no doubt she should recognize Lucia; nevertheless, she looked in vague bewilderment at one and another of the elegantly attired ladies, tripping past her in their stylish travelling suits, looking, to her unaccustomed eyes, as like as two peas.

Uncertain how she should proceed, Aunt Jem was about making up her mind to stop the next flounced and ringleted young lady who should emerge from the cars, when she was startled by having a pair of arms thrown about her and a musical voice shout in her ear:

"You dear old darling Aunt Jem! I knew you the moment I saw you. Haven't I taken you by surprise? Now, aint you glad to see me, you blessed old auntie you?" Accompanied by vigorous hugs and two or three violent little pecks at the old spinster's withered lips.

Aunt Jem returned the salutations in a stately uncompromising way, and having deep-rooted prejudices against loud talking

in public places, hurried off to see about the baggage, inducted her niece into the chaise, and turned Dobbin's head toward home. Lucia laughed and chattered like a magpie beside her aunt. A beauty she was undoubtedly, and possessed of all the dash and sparkle that belongs to practised coquetry. A little under medium size, her perfect form was set off by a tight-fitting suit of some dark material, only relieved at neck and wrist by frills of delicate lace. At her throat was a knot of scarlet ribbon, and in her jaunty turban a scarlet bird's wing. With a faultless complexion and a pair of flashing black eyes, Lucia Lindencourt looked the impersonation of arch and winning beauty.

"You darling old auntie," she went on, "I've been dying to come to you for ages past, and now that I'm here, I shall stay a long time. Is it far to Oakland?—that's the name of your place, isn't it? And is it quite in the country, where one can be as secluded and retired as one could wish? O, I'm frantic to get there! You don't know how tired I am of the city, with its endless rounds of gayety and party-going." And Miss Lucia closed her world-weary eyes and gave a soft little sigh of satisfaction at the thought of her emancipation from the bondage of fashionable frivolities.

Aunt Jem began to pity the poor child whose existence had been passed amid scenes of folly and dissipation, when perhaps her whole soul revolted against them. Dear unsophisticated Aunt Jem! She had a deal to learn.

Before their arrival at Oakland, Lucia had formed a fair estimate of the circle composing her aunt's household, as well as of the new scenes among which her path was now to run.

"Cindy," said Aunt Jem, addressing her help, who was half servant half companion, "this is my niece, Lucia Lindencourt, who has come to stay a spell. You may take her up to the west room and then come and get us some dinner."

Lucia declared herself half famished, and won the heart of both mistress and maid by her praises of the palatable viands where-with the table was loaded. Fresh home-baked bread, sweet new butter, with the flavor of clover and buttercups plainly perceptible, delicate honey from the hives, which stood in a row at the bottom of Aunt Jem's garden, yellow cream, lying

thick over a saucer of field strawberries, custards, as delicious as eggs and milk could make them, all these, and more, were there to tempt Miss Lucia's keen appetite.

Before many days had passed she had made friends with every person and thing on the place, from Clem Myers the hired man, down to Bruno the old house dog, and all seemed alike bewitched by her bright winning ways.

She never did anything except to follow her aunt and Cindy about, asking eager little questions about this and that mystery of housekeeping, opening her eyes in innocent wonder as some more than usually complicated process of cookery turned out a miracle of perfection under their practised hands.

On the Sabbath, Aunt Jem, who was punctuality itself in her attendance at the village church, donned her best dress, and with Lucia in her wake, sallied out, with her usual bunch of fennel lying between the folds of her handkerchief, and her fan, hymn-book and sunshade firmly borne aloft like votive offerings.

Lucia's Paris hat, with its ravishing ostrich feather, her white dress and her filmy lace mantle, filled the hearts of the feminine portion of the congregation with envy, while her flashing eyes and pretty face subdued the masculine hearts.

Poor old Parson Groner did his best, but for the life of them, I don't believe a dozen of his congregation could have told you the subject of the discourse.

Lucia herself listened closely. You would have sworn her attention had not wandered from the speaker, yet she knew that the red-haired youth in the next pew was devouring her with his eyes; that two or three men on the right were doing their best to stare her out of countenance; in fine, that she was the observed of all observers, and had created a decided sensation.

Aunt Jem, like a good church-woman, lingered to speak with her pastor, and thus, when the two ladies made their exit, the whole congregation was gathered about the door, and Aunt Jem and Lucia were obliged to pass between two files of watchers.

Lucia was now fairly settled at Oakland; the fame of her beauty had been heralded far and wide; when she appeared in the little village streets she was followed by a train of admirers; did she enter a store, to make some insignificant purchase of tape or needles, her worshippers waited patiently out-

side for her reappearance. Simple-minded Aunt Jem was greatly concerned lest such open and undisguised admiration should turn the head of her niece, and was greatly comforted to perceive that Lucia never seemed to be aware of the excitement she was creating.

Clem Myers and Cindy had been engaged for years, and it was generally understood among the villagers that when Clem should have laid aside sufficient money to stock a farm, and Cindy had a sufficient number of housekeeping articles put away in lavender, they were to be married. Aunt Jem sniffed at the arrangement somewhat, on account of the trouble she would be put to if Cindy left, but the consummation of their hopes seemed so far in the future that the plan had really given little uneasiness as yet. Since Lucia's advent Cindy had had many a headache. Clem was, to all appearances, enslaved by those soft dark eyes. Cindy declared to herself that he was bewitched.

One evening Clem made the announcement that he had seen "one of them artist fellows" haunting the south meadow, apparently making a study of a group of trees. Lucia was interested.

"What sort of a man was he, Clem?"

"Good enough, fur's I could see."

"Tall or short?"

"Well, rather tallish."

"Light hair?"

"Guess you'd thought so; a regular tow-head."

The next morning Lucia was missing.

Aunt Jem was not greatly alarmed, and Cindy, in her heart, accused Clem of having allowed the girl to accompany him to Centreville, whither he had driven on some errand; but in the course of the forenoon, Tom, being interrogated, deposed that he had seen Miss Lucia and a gentleman walking toward the south meadow, that they were talking very earnestly, and were so completely absorbed that he, Tom, had passed close to them unobserved and had heard Miss Lucia say, "I will never marry him, never!" and then the gentleman had said, "Then something must be done instantly;" and then he, Tom, had heard no more, having passed out of earshot.

Aunt Jem was stricken dumb with astonishment, and stood like a figure of consternation.

With all her determination to do her duty by her niece, she seemed to have failed.

Lucia was in some kind of difficulty, but how to set about her rescue? Poor old Aunt Jem's nose was like to get a permanent twist in it that day, and her capstrings utterly refused to be fastened, and there was much hurrying to and fro, and search from end to end of the farm; but nothing was to be seen of Lucia.

When they had reached this dire conclusion there was a rattle of wheels, a carriage drew up at the door, and from it descended a sprightly old man, whose courtly ways and extreme politeness assured Aunt Jem, before a word had been exchanged, that Lucia's guardian stood before her.

And so, indeed, it proved; and when he had been told of his ward's disappearance, it was laughable to see how all his fine courtly manners dropped from him, and he became furious with rage; accused Aunt Jem of playing tricks upon him, of having secretly conveyed her niece away, or at least having connived at her disappearance, became incoherent, and having frightened the two poor women half out of their senses, flung himself into his carriage and departed.

When Clem returned Cindy made a dash at him, expecting to electrify him with the intelligence of Lucia's escapade, but he waved her off with calm superiority, and, advancing to Aunt Jem, handed her a letter.

"I guess that'll explain it all." And he walked off to attend to Dobbin.

Aunt Jem opened her letter with trembling fingers, and this was what she read:

"MY DEAR DARLING AUNTIE,—I hope I haven't frightened you quite to death. Forgive my sudden departure—it seemed the only way out of the net they had woven about me. My guardian was determined to marry me to his son, whom I hate; but Carl and I have managed to outwit him. You would like Carl if you knew him. He paints lovely pictures, and will some day be a great artist. We have loved each other for a long time, but my guardy always found means to separate us. We are going on to New York to take the steamer for Europe, and when we arrive I will write again. Think of me as kindly as you can, you dear old darling, for I love you next to Carl, and shall always be
Your affectionate niece,

LUCIA ST. ARMAND."

"Well," said Cindy, when she had been made acquainted with the contents of the letter, "she's got more gumption than I

thought she had. For one, I'm glad they got off before that bad-tempered old Frenchman got here."

Clem, upon being interrogated, explained that he had driven up to the station just before the train started, that Lucia had told him of her marriage, handed him the letter, bidden him good-by, and that both she and her husband—the light-haired fellow he had seen down in the south meadow—looked

the very picture of contented happiness.

Whether the happiness he had seen reflected in their countenances awakened in Clem's breast a desire to follow their example, or not, certain it is that Cindy was importuned to name the day, and Parson Gro-ner was notified that his services were soon to be required.

Aunt Jem tells us that Lucia and her husband are to spend the winter in Italy.